

3

(Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta

The (Middle-Length) Ghaṭṭikāra Discourse | M 81

Theme: Gotama as the brahmin youth Jotipāla, the monk, under Kassapa Buddha

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[For notes on the terms “**Buddha**,” “**buddha**,” “**Bodhisattva**,” “**bodhisattva**”: see SD 49.8b introduction.]

1 Sutta summary and highlights

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY and highlights

1.1.1 The narrative threads

1.1.1.1 The Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta, the “Ghaṭṭikāra discourse,” is a canonical “past-birth” (*jātaka*) story¹ of a potter Ghaṭṭikāra of the village market-town Veha,liṅga [§18.2; 3.1] and his close friend, the brahmin youth, Jotipāla (our future Buddha Gotama), both of whom live in the time of the past buddha Kassapa.²

1.1.1.2 The Sutta has 4 main narrative threads or themes:

[§§1-5] The historical Buddha and the immediate past buddha, Kassapa.

[§§6-12] The spiritual friendship between the potter Ghaṭṭikāra and the brahmin youth Jotipāla.

[§§13-21] Kikī the king of Kāsī and Ghaṭṭikāra’s devotion.

[§§22-24] The king Kikī of Kāsī devotion.

[§25] Our Buddha Gotama identifies himself as Jotipāla.

1.1.2 THE HISTORICAL BUDDHA AND KASSAPA BUDDHA

1.1.2.1 [§§1-3] The Sutta opens with the Buddha wandering with some monks in Kosala country, when smiling at a certain spot, recalling the past buddha Kassapa.³

[§§3-4] When the Buddha says that it was the location of the market-town **Vehaliṅga**, near which the past buddha Kassapa used to sojourn, Ānanda at once prepares a seat for the Buddha there, so that the spot “will have been used by two arhats, fully self-awakened buddhas” [§4.3].

1.1.2.2 This statement may be the locus classicus for the appearance of the “two Buddhas,” the past Cosmic Buddha Prabhūtaratna and the present Buddha Sakyamuni sitting together in a niche of a colossal stupa, depicted in chapter 15 of **the Lotus Sutra**. This story, if taken as religious symbolism and with literary licence, represents the meeting of the past and the present, that is, the timelessness of the Dharma.

Prabhūtaratna is one of the innumerable Cosmic Buddhas, fabulous eternal beings, inhabiting the Mahāyāna hagiographical universe. He is not found in the suttas or in any Pali literature. The reason is simple: he was invented centuries after early Buddhism, probably around the 1st century CE.

1.1.2.3 [§5] The Buddha then points out to Ānanda where Kassapa Buddha’s monastery park was located, and where he sat, teaching his community of monks. [§6] Then, the Buddha tells Ānanda about the potter Ghaṭṭikāra and his childhood friend, the brahmin youth Jotipāla. This is, of course, an odd friendship, one between a low-caste potter⁴ and a high-class brahmin youth. They are close friends for two possible reasons: (1) they have been friends since childhood, and (2) they live in an area of north India where Brahminism is weak.

1.1.3 The spiritual friendship between Ghaṭṭikāra and Jotipāla

1.1.3.1 [§§6-9] The potter Ghaṭṭikāra is introduced as Kassapa Buddha’s “chief supporter” [§6.1]. At once, we see him as one who is enthusiastic and fearless in his faith in Kassapa Buddha. After all, he is a

¹ On the *jātaka* genre, see Feer 1875; Cowell 1895:v-x; Rhys Davids 1903:189-209; Lévi 1906; Winternitz 1913; Oldenberg 1919; Gokuldas 1951; Hamm 1968; Behm 1971; Sen 1974; Jones 1979; Cummings 1982; Norman 1983: 77-84; Sarkar 1990; Lal Nagar 1993; Laut 1993; Kulasuriya 1996; Hinüber 1996:54-58, 1998; Brown 1997; Ahir 2000; Sugimoto 2002; Ohnuma 2004; Peris 2004; Shaw 2006:xix-lxvii; Skilling 2006a, 2006b, 2008; Appleton 2007, 2010; and Analayo 2010f:55-71.

² Kassapa was the buddha just before ours. On the past buddhas, see SD 36.2 (3).

³ DhsA 294, 496.

⁴ Vinaya incl pottery (*kumbhakāra, sippa*) amongst the crafts regarded of those of low social status (V 4:7,1).

lay non-returner [§18.13]. Jotipāla, his “beloved companion” [§6.2], appears initially to be an arrogant and biased young brahmin.

1.1.3.2 Ghaṭṭikāra persists in asking Jotipāla to follow him to meet the Buddha Kassapa. He thrice invites Jotipāla to go with him to see the Buddha, but Jotipāla rudely rejects his invitations, seeing no point in meeting a “baldheaded little recluse” [§§6.3-6.7].

1.1.3.3 Ghaṭṭikāra then uses **a skillful means** and suggest that they go down to the river to wash [§6.8], which brings them closer to where the Buddha is residing. Ghaṭṭikāra thrice invites Jotipāla to come along with him to see the Buddha, and thrice again Jotipāla rejects the invitations with the same rude answers [§7].

1.1.3.4 [§8] Ghaṭṭikāra now uses “corporal persuasion” (which suggests their intimacy)—he takes hold of Jotipāla’s waistband (which gives him a firm grip of Jotipāla)—but Jotipāla loosens the belt to free himself. At this point, it is likely that Jotipāla is going whither they were before. Ghaṭṭikāra would not allow that, seeing it as a regression.⁵

1.1.3.5 [§§9-10] Almost spontaneously, perhaps out of desperation, Ghaṭṭikāra then seizes Jotipāla “by the hair” (*kesesu*), freshly lustrated, which clearly refers to Jotipāla’s top-knot (*moli*; Skt *śikhā*), loosened after washing.⁶ Jotipāla is evidently shocked, because this is the most sacred spot of a brahmin’s body.⁷ It is said that, when a brahmin dies, Brahmā seizes him by the topknot up to heaven!⁸ [§9]

1.1.3.6 Finally, Jotipāla is apprehensive, “Surely, I think this is no small matter!” [§9.2], and he relents to visit the Buddha with Ghaṭṭikāra. He is still apprehensive: while Ghaṭṭikāra salutes the Buddha in the proper way [§10.2], Jotipāla only exchanges courtesies with Kassapa Buddha [§10.3].⁹ The Chinese **Avadāna** account, in fact, takes a different tack here [1.4.2].

However, the turning-point is when Kassapa Buddha gives them a Dharma talk, and Jotipāla is simply impressed, so that, on taking leave, Jotipāla, following Ghaṭṭikāra, salutes the Buddha, too [§10.6].

1.1.3.7 [§§11-12] Having heard the Dharma, deeply inspired, Jotipāla asks Ghaṭṭikāra why he has not renounced the world. Ghaṭṭikāra replies that he has to support his aged blind parents [§11.1]. Here, we see the theme of filial piety highlighted. Even a lay non-returner defers his renunciation to fulfill his family obligations. Early Buddhism is clearly not against the family, certainly not aged blind parents.¹⁰

⁵ The Chin parallel, too, reports that Ghaṭṭikāra seizes Jotipāla’s hair immediately as soon the latter shows a lack of interest in visiting Kassapa Buddha, MĀ 63 (T1.500a22). Mahā, vastu, however, says that Ghaṭṭikāra goes so far as to seize Jotipāla’s hair because Jotipāla has pushed him away, and is about to leave (Basak 1963a:415,7; Senart 1882a:321,6; cf similar account at T197 (T4.173a3). The Mvst account thus shows Ghaṭṭikāra acting in a more spontaneous way in doing what would have been taken as a serious breach of traditional brahminical etiquette.

⁶ Chin Avadāna notes that this action is so outrageous in this part of India that it was punishable with death.

⁷ T197 (T4.173a6). In his detailed study of the implications of the act of seizing someone’s hair in the Indian context, Hara 1986a:71-72 explains that in a fighting situation “the seizure of the hair in single combat means complete control over one’s adversary,” as “once he succeeds in holding his adversary’s hair, he is in a position to behead him.” Therefore, “being held by the hair is an unbearable humiliation.” Outside of a battle context, forcefully grabbing the hair of another, such as, eg, one’s teacher or of another’s wife, are similarly humiliating and therefore “censured as an ignoble act” (ibid p83).

⁸ The topknot is called (Skt) *śikhā*, and the tonsure, *chaulam* (Hindi). Manu, smṛti (“Laws of Manu”) (2.85) states that a child of any of the 3 upper classes should have his hair shorn and keep a *śikhā* when he is one or three. The usual practice today amongst orthodox followers of Brahmanism is to perform this ritual when the child is 3.

⁹ Mahā, vastu (Mvst 1:321 f) reports that before teaching, Kāśyapa Buddha wants to give the 3 refugees and the 5 precepts to the duo (Basak 1963a:416,4; Senart 1882a:321,18). Jyotipāla, however, says that he could not take all the 5 precepts, since he still has to kill someone. When Kāśyapa asks whom he wants to kill, Jyotipāla replies that he has to kill Ghaṭṭikāra for having seized his hair. This rather bizarre turn thus agrees with the Chinese Avadāna version’s highlighting Ghaṭṭikāra’s act as being rather improper. On the idea of taking only a selection of the 5 precepts, see Agostini 2008.

¹⁰ Bailey explains that “Ghaṭṭikāra ... is the archetypal image of the village lay Buddhist,” and that “the symbolism of the blind parents, found often elsewhere in Indian literature ... lends more dramatic emphasis to his domestic responsibility.” (2003:247)

That being the case, Jotipāla feels that he should himself renounce the world [§11.2]. He goes to the Buddha, requests to go forth, and is duly admitted into the order [§12].

1.1.4 Ghaṭṭikāra's devotion

1.1.4.1 [§§13-17] As soon as king Kikī¹¹ hears that the Buddha is in his kingdom, he visits the Buddha to pay his respects [§14]. He invites the Buddha for a meal on the following day [§§15-16]. After the meal, the king invites the Buddha and the monks to spend the rains retreat at Benares, but the Buddha declines, saying that he has already accepted a prior invitation. The king is deeply saddened [§17].¹²

1.1.4.2 [§§18-21] On being asked by the king, the Buddha answers that the invitation is from the potter Ghaṭṭikāra [§18.2]. The Buddha begins to list Ghaṭṭikāra's virtues, beginning with the fact, unlike the king, Ghaṭṭikāra does not show any negative emotions [§§18.3+4].

1.1.4.3 [§§18.5-13] Ghaṭṭikāra has gone for refuge [§18.6] and keeps to the 5 precepts [§18.6]. He has all the basic qualities of a saint [§18.7] and understands the 4 truths [§18.8]. Furthermore, he takes only one meal a day and is celibate [§18.9], does not use money [§18.10], does not dig the ground to make his wares [§18.11], and does not engage in buying and selling, but only in fair exchange of his wares for what he needs to support himself and his parents [§18.12].

Hence, Ghaṭṭikāra lives just like a monk. Indeed, he has a monastic mind, free of lust, as he is a non-returner [§18.13].

1.1.5 The trust amongst saints

1.1.5.1 [§§19-21] The Buddha then relates three occasions reflecting Ghaṭṭikāra's devotion and non-attachment. On the first two occasions [1.1.5.2], the Buddha goes to Ghaṭṭikāra's house for alms. Upon the invitation of Ghaṭṭikāra's parents, the Buddha takes the meal at the table [§19].¹³ This happens again a second time, with the same outcome [§20].

The third occasion is when the Buddha's cell leaks and needs thatching [§21.1]. The Buddha instructs the monks to get some thatch from Ghaṭṭikāra, and his parents tell them to take the thatch from Ghaṭṭikāra's own workshop [§§21.6-10]. On every occasion, both Ghaṭṭikāra and his parents are inspired with joy (*pīti*) on the trust that the Buddha and the monks have shown to them.¹⁴

On account of all these virtues, Ghaṭṭikāra is Kassapa Buddha's chief supporter. Ghaṭṭikāra's wealth, as such, is a spiritually noble one, far greater than king Kikī's, or even all the world's wealth. This is the wealth of self-liberation.

1.1.5.2 The Mahāvastu and the Saṅghabhedavastu have no account of our Buddha's second visit for a meal at Ghaṭṭikāra's house. Indeed, such a second occasion would seem repetitive. The Sutta says that Kassapa Buddha first has rice (*odāna*) with curries [§19], and on the second occasion, has dumplings (or

¹¹ *Kikī* (Skt *krkī*; onomatopoeiac) means "blue jay" or the Indian roller (*Coracias benghalensis*), a member of the roller family of birds, 26-27 cm long. They are found widely across tropical Asia, from Iraq eastward across the Indian subcontinent to Indochina. They are best known for the aerobatic displays of the male during the breeding season.

¹² Mahāvastu (Mvst 1:326) says that the upset king actually wept (Basak 1963a:422,14; Senart 1882a: 326,4).

¹³ Saṅgha,bheda,vastu reports that Kāśyapa at first softly knocks on the bolt to announce his presence to the blind parents, thereby causing them to initiate the conversation (Gnoli 1978a: 27,5; D (1) 'dul ba, ga 7b7 or Q (1030) nge 7a6). Ghaṭṭikāra S, however, says that Kassapa directly asks them where Ghaṭṭikāra has gone [§19.2]. Mahāvastu (Mvst 1:327-329) and Saṅgha,bheda,vastu note that Kāśyapa had come to the potter's house while undertaking the practice of going begging without interruption (*sāvadānam piṇḍāya caranto*) (Basak 1963a:424,12; Senart 1882a: 327,7; Gnoli 1978a:27,3). DPL sv *sapadānam* calls into question the commentarial etym at Vism 60,20 of the corresponding Pali expression *sapadāna* as *saha apadānena*, "without interruption," as does Senart 1882a:595, who suggests the Skt expression to point to *sa + āvadāna*, "part by part," in the sense of "successively." The corresponding passage in MĀ 63 (T1.502a13) speaks of begging food "one after another" or "in turn," 次第乞食 *cidi qǐ shí*. The implication of this practice is that a monk begs at each house on the road he has taken, not leaving out any house because he anticipates that he might not receive.

¹⁴ §§19.6+20.5+21.9; Mvst 1:327-329 (Basak 1963a:425,10; Senart 1882a:327,20). MĀ 63 (T1.502a26), and Saṅgha,bheda,vastu (Gnoli 1978a:27,31 & D (1) 'dul ba, ga 8b1 or Q (1030) nge 7b6) add that he sits cross-legged for 7 days experiencing only joy. See prec n.

porridge) (*kummāsa*) with curries [§20].¹⁵ “One might wonder,” notes Analayo, “if this passage in the Majjhima Nikāya and Madhyama Āgama versions could be the outcome of a textual doubling [1.1.5.4] of what was originally only a single episode.” (2011:448)

1.1.5.3 The Chinese Madhyama Āgama parallel, and the Sanskrit and Tibetan Saṅghabhedavastu further specify that the Buddha helps himself to the food in accordance with the “custom of the northern Kurus.”¹⁶ According to **the Āṭṭaṇṭiya Sutta** (D 32), in the mythical region of northern Kuru, private ownership has been abolished,¹⁷ and the same is said in the Divyāvādāna, too.¹⁸ Thus, the “custom of the northern Kurus” might imply that in an ownerless society there would be no need to offer food formally.

1.1.5.4 The Saṅghabhedavastu, in its account of the Buddha’s visit to Ghaṭikāra’s house, notes how the parents recount the whole episode of the Buddha’s visit to their son Ghaṭikāra when he comes home.¹⁹ Thus, here, the account of the Buddha’s partaking of food also occurs twice, but these are two accounts of the *same* occasion. (This is an example of “textual doubling.”)

Analayo suggests that if a similar repetition of this episode should have been found in an early version of the discourse, “it could easily be imagined how a minor slip of memory in regard to the type of food taken by Kassapa Buddha could have introduced a variation that resulted in turning into two consecutive events what was originally only a single event.” If that should indeed have been the case, then this doubling must have occurred at a relatively early stage of the transmission of the text, as it is found in the Majjhima Nikāya and the Madhyama Āgama versions. (2011:448 f)

1.1.5.5 The (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta, its Madhyama Āgama parallel, and their counterparts in the Mahāvastu and the Saṅghabhedavastu relate another visit (this time by monks) to Ghaṭikāra’s house. This is when Kassapa Buddha’s hut is without thatch, when the monks take some thatch from the newly thatched roof of Ghaṭikāra’s workshop during the latter’s absence.²⁰ The (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta, its Madhyama Āgama version, and the Saṅghabhedavastu agree that even though Ghaṭikāra’s workshop remains without a roof for three months, for the whole of this period, it does not rain into it [§21.10].²¹

According to the Madhyama Āgama discourse, the Mahāvastu, and the Saṅghabhedavastu, Kassapa Buddha highlights the contrast between Ghaṭikāra, who is not at all upset when the new thatch of his

¹⁵ According to MĀ 63 (T1.502a18), however, in the first instance he took “wheat and rice,” 麥飯 *mài fàn*, and on the second occasion described at T1.502b7 he had “rice,” 粳米飯 *jīng mǐ fàn*.

¹⁶ MĀ 63 (T1.502a19 + T1.502b8): 鬱單曰法 *yù dān yuè fǎ*, which Saṅgha,bheda,vastu (Gnoli 1978a:27,14) refers to as “depending upon the conventions of Uttarakuru” (*uttara,kauravaṃ samayaṃ adhiṣṭhāya*) and D (1) ’dul ba, ga 8a3 or Q (1030) nge 7b1: byang gi sgra mi snyan gyi dus byin gyis brlabs nas. This note attempts to prevent any criticism that it is improper for a monk (and thus implicitly for the Buddha, too) just to help himself to food: see Pāc 40 (V 4:90,1), and its parallels, *pātayantika* (or *pāyattika*, *prāyaścittaka*, etc) rule 39 in Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, T1428 (T22.663c15), rule 39 in Kaśyapīya V, T1460 (T24.662c18), rule 37 in Mahīśāsaka V, T1421 (T22.53a28), rule 35 in Mahāsaṅghika V, T1425 (T22.357b4), rule 39 in (Mūla-)Sarvāsti,vāda V, T1442 (T23.826c18), and rule 39 in Sarvāstivāda V, T1435 (T23.96b9), which agree in prohibiting a fully ordained monk from partaking of food that has not been offered to him.

¹⁷ D 32/3:199,27; see Chin parallel, T1245 (T21.217c2), and the Tib version in Hoffmann 1939:46.

¹⁸ Cowell 1886:215,20 or Vaidya 1999:133,18; cf **A 9.21/4:396,10**, SHT IV 558V1 (p 244), and T1440 (T23.-527a11). For further references to Uttarakuru, see Analayo 2008m and Schmithausen 2005a:178.

¹⁹ Gnoli 1978a:27,20 and D (1) ’dul ba, ga 8a4 or Q (1030) nge 7b3.

²⁰ A minor difference is that when the potter’s parents ask who is taking away the roof [§21.6], the monks reply by addressing the mother “sister,” *bhaginī*. It is possible that this is a dual vocative (a single term addressing a pair of people) for *both* parents: see SD 13.1 (3.1.1.4); SD 43.6 (1.2). According to MĀ 63 (T1.502b26), they used the address 長老 *zhǎng lǎo*, “elders.”

²¹ MĀ 63 (T1.502c11) explains that this happened owing to Kassapa Buddha’s power, 蒙佛威神故 *méng fó wēi shén gù*, similarly noted in Saṅgha,bheda,vastu (Gnoli 1978a:29,5: *buddhasya buddhānubhāvena*; D (1) ’dul ba, ga 9a6 or Q (1030) nge 8b4: *sangs rgyas rnam kyī sangs rgyas kyī mthu*), followed by also mentioning the effect of rains (or, the power of the devas = rains) (*devatānām devatānubhāvena*) or else *lha rnam kyī lha ’i mthus*. On such association of the Buddha’s power with that of devas or supernatural powers, see also Granoff 1996:81. **Naḷapāna J** (J 20) notes that no rain will fall into Ghaṭikāra’s workshop for the rest of the present aeon (*kappa*) (J 1:272,12), which could well refer to a “climate phenomenon.”

workshop has been removed or when his meal has been eaten by someone else, and king Kikī, who is sorely displeased when Kassapa does not accept his invitation to spend the rains at Vārāṇasī.²²

1.1.5.6 In the case of Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta, the theme of the account is that of “showing trust” (*abhivissatha*), which comes from the word *vissāsa*, “trust” (Dh 204c). As the Buddha’s chief supporter, it is clear that Ghaṭṭikāra has given the “invitation” (*pavāraṇā*)²³ to whatever is available in his house—it must be remembered that Ghaṭṭikāra is a non-returner; hence, he has no attachment to any worldly property.

The account here, in other words, is **a special relationship of trust** (*vissāsa*) between the monastic saints (or aryas) (the Buddha and the monks) and a layman saint. We are not told of the attainment of Ghaṭṭikāra’s parents, who, from their conduct, show at least great faith in the Buddha and the monks.

1.1.6 King Kikī of Kāsī

1.1.6.1 [§§22-24] King (or Rajah) Kikī makes **a great offering** to Ghaṭṭikāra [§22]. However, when the king’s servant (“man”) made the offering [§23], Ghaṭṭikāra turns them down, saying that what he has is sufficient to support himself and his parents, and also to support the Buddha and the monks [§24]. Since Ghaṭṭikāra lives in the spirit of a monastic, he would therefore not store large amounts of food, some of which would rot, causing wastage, and therefore attract vermin and animals that may be accidentally killed or destroy the storage.

1.1.6.2 The Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta, its Madhyama Āgama parallel, and their counterparts in the Mahāvastu and the Saṅghabhedavastu describe how Kassapa Buddha arrives in Vārāṇasī (Benares), the capital of Kāsī, Kiki’s kingdom. King Kikī invites Kassapa Buddha and his monks to **a meal**, at the end of which the king invites the Buddha to spend the three-month rains retreat at Vārāṇasī, promising his abundant support.²⁴ Kassapa Buddha, however, turns down the king’s invitation.

1.1.6.3 Before Kikī invites Kassapa for the rains, **the Mahāvastu** gives new details. King Kikī invites the Buddha and his monks to be the first to occupy the newly built terrace called Kokanāda (“lotus”) in the palace. There, he serves them with *parṇakulaka* rice and seven kinds of dishes. (Mvst 1:323-326)

After that, Kikī announces to Kassapa Buddha that he plans to build **a retreat** for the Buddha comprising 7000 gabled buildings, 7000 seats, 7000 walkways (for meditation and exercise), 7000 horses, and 7000 park attendants, one to attend to each of the monks. The Buddha, however, turns down the king’s extravagant offer.²⁵ While the Mahāvastu mentions 7000 monks²⁶ accompanying the Buddha, the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta only says that the Buddha was wandering amongst the Kosalas “together with a large community of monks” [§1].

1.1.6.4 Kassapa’s refusal to accept the invitation upsets the king and prompts him to inquire if Kassapa Buddha has a better supporter. Kassapa confirms that this is the case, and tells the king that his supporter is the potter Ghaṭṭikāra.

²² MĀ 63 (T1.502c12), Basak 1963a:427,10; Senart 1882a:329,6, Gnoli 1978a:29,7 and D (1) ’dul ba, ga 9a7 or Q (1030) nge 8b4.

²³ On the “invitation to ask (for support)” (*pavāraṇā*), see SD 42.16 (4.3(1) n); SD 46.19 (3.2.4) n.

²⁴ §17.4 only implicitly refers to the support the king is willing to give: “This will be suitable support for the community” (*eva,rūpaṃ saṅghassa upaṭṭhānaṃ bhavissatīti*), indicating that he would continue to support the sangha as he has just done. Mahāvastu (Mvst 1:325, 329) and Saṅgha,bheda,vastu, on their part, give a detailed description of the dwellings and supplies the king intends to provide: see Basak 1963a:422,7; Senart 1882a:325,17; Gnoli 1978a: 26,3; D (1) ’dul ba, ga 7a6 or Q (1030) nge 6b5. MĀ 63 (T1.501a22) similarly reports that the king lists the number of dwellings and the sumptuous food he wishes to give. These descriptions further enhance the contrast between the king’s material wealth and Ghaṭṭikāra’s spiritual wealth.

²⁵ Mvst 1:326; Basak 1963a:389-409; Senart 1882a:303-317. This episode is also found in Mahīśāsaka Vinaya, T1421 (T22.172a7). According to this account, the respect and support shown by the king’s daughter to Kāśyapa (Skt form of Kassapa) and his monks infuriate the local brahmin community. It comes to the point where the brahmins demand that the princess be killed. Mvst says that they even employ assassins to kill Kāśyapa (Basak 1963a: 404,13; Senart 1882a:313,19). Given such strong resentment among the local brahmins, it would be natural for the story to continue with Kāśyapa choosing to spend the rains retreat elsewhere, to avoid worsening the situation.

²⁶ If we imagine how much food is needed to feed this huge number of monks *daily*, we may take this number as ancient Indian hyperbole: see SD 49.8 (16), The nature of numbers in the suttas.

The Mahāvastu continues detailing how the king asks Kāśyapa²⁷ Buddha what kind of wealth this potter has, that he is able to support the Buddha and the sangha.²⁸ The Buddha replies by describing Ghaṭikāra's virtuous conduct, explaining that this is the potter's wealth (Mvst 1:327-329).²⁹

1.1.6.5 The (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta, for its part, contrasts the king's sadness at Kassapa Buddha turning down his invitation to observe the rains-retreat at Vārāṇasī [1.1.4.1] with that of the joy (*pīti*) of Ghaṭikāra (and his parents) upon learning that the Buddha and the monks have profound trust in them to the extent of freely taking what are allowable to them [1.1.5.1].

1.1.7 Conclusion

1.1.7.1 [§25] At the end of the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta, our Buddha Gotama identifies himself as the brahmin youth Jotipāla. The Sutta parallels agree in this identification of one of the Buddha's past lives.³⁰

However, while the Majjhima Nikāya version concludes at this point, according to the Madhyama Āgama account, the Buddha continues by highlighting that, in contrast to his present life as a fully awakened buddha, in his past life as Jotipāla he was still unable to reach "perfection."³¹ [1.4.3]

1.1.7.2 According to Buddhist hagiology,³² it is said that when Jotipāla died, he was reborn as **Santusita** ("fully contented")³³ or **Seta,ketu** ("white comet"),³⁴ king of the Tusita devas. And when Santusita/Setaketu died, he was reborn as our Buddha Gotama.

1.1.7.3 However, there is also the story of Vessantara, the longest and most dramatic of the Jātakas, that is, **the Vessantara Jātaka** (J 547), the epic on the Bodhisattva accomplishing his perfection of giving.³⁵ It is also said that after Vessantara died, he was reborn as Setaketu, lord of Tusita.³⁶ Considering that Vessantara is not born in a Buddha's time, and does not renounce the world, it is likely that his story would be anterior to the Jotipāla story ((Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta) in Buddhist hagiology.

1.1.7.4 Hence, the Jotipāla story is clearly earlier, surely before when the teachings on the 10

²⁷ This is the Sanskrit form of "Kassapa."

²⁸ We are quite familiar with the terms **Buddha** (here, referring to Gotama) and **Dharma** (here, his teaching). As for "**sangha**," the initial lower case is to show that it is the spiritual or natural community of saints, not an instituted congregation or sectarian group, esp non-renunciants or non-saints (which may be designated "Sangha," as a proper name for such different groups).

²⁹ Basak 1963a:423,4; Senart 1882a:326,12.

³⁰ MĀ 63 (T1.503a4, Basak 1963a:436,2; Senart 1882a:335,5, on which, see also Hinüber 1998:198, Gnoli 1978a:30,14 and D (1) 'dul ba, ga 10a3 or Q (1030) nge 9a7. *Mahāvibhāṣā, T1545 (T27.863c22) also refers to the Bodhisattva's past life when he was a monk disciple of Kassapa Buddha. Lüders notes a pictorial representation of the meeting between Kassapa Buddha and the young brahmin, in which the latter is depicted as a monk endowed with *uśṇīṣa* and *ūrṇā* (1913:883). The young brahmin's possession of these two out of the 32 characteristics is a clear indication of his impending buddhahood and thus confirms his status as a past life of Gotama Buddha, in fact, his possession of 31 of the 32 characteristics is explicitly mentioned in T197 (T4.172c11). For another representation of the same event in a Gandhara sculpture, see Vogel 1954:810. See also Analayo 2012: 169 n24. On rebirth, see **Is rebirth immediate** (SD 2.17) & **Pāyāsi S** (D 23), SD 39.4.

³¹ This "perfection" refers to his overcoming suffering completely, as related at MĀ 63 (T1.503a8): "[I] did not reach the ultimate ... did not abandon birth, old age, disease, and death ... was not able to overcome suffering completely," 不至究竟 ... 不離生老病死 ... 未能得脫一切苦。 *bù zhì jiūjìng, bù lí shēnglǎobìngsǐ, wèinéng dé tuō yīqiè kǔ.*

³² Hagiology is literature or tradition with the lives and legends of saints and sacred beings.

³³ Called Santusita (a "young deva," *deva,putta*) at D 11,74+75/1:218 (SD 1.7); S 40.11/4:280; A 8.36/4:243 (SD 22.17); B 1.66/6; BA 53. The J intro mentions "Santusita" as being one of the devas who come to declare to the Bodhisattva that it is "time for his buddhahood," with no mention of the Bodhisattva's name (J 1:48).

³⁴ Comy says our Buddha was Setaketu (a "young deva," *deva,putta*) in Tusita in his penultimate life (VA 1:161; MA 1:125). There is a **Seta,ketu J** (J 377), but *Seta,ketu* here is the Bodhisattva's chief disciple, an arrogant high-caste brahmin (*udicca brahmin*) (J 377/3:232 f); Mvst 1:337. Otherwise, this name is rather obscure.

³⁵ **Vessantara J** (J 547/6:479-593).

³⁶ J 1:47; DhA 1:69.

perfections (P *dasa pāramī*) were borrowed from the Mahāyāna 6 perfections (Skt *ṣaḍ pāramitā*).³⁷ Moreover, his story is the subject of the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta (M 81). [1.4.3]

1.2 STORY LAYERS

1.2.1 The (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta has an interesting narrative structure. The Sutta has a total of 3 narrators. **The first narrator** is Sutta redactor, that is, Ānanda (or the role attributed to him) and the council elders [§§1-2]. He is the one who introduces the Sutta, connects the episodes and events together, and closes the Sutta. The **first narrative** (practically the bulk of the Sutta), however, is related by Gotama Buddha, **the second narrator** [§§3-25]. Then, first narrator closes the Sutta.

Within the Buddha’s dialogue with Ānanda, there is a long **nested story of the past buddha Kassapa** [§§5-24]. The shell of the nested story is related to Ānanda. This is marked by the vocative, “Ānanda.”

There is another long nested account—Kassapa Buddha’s description of **Ghaṭṭikāra’s virtues and attainment**—told to king Kikī [§§18.2-21.10], highlighted by the vocative, “maharajah” (*mahā,rāja*). This nested story is told by **the third narrator**, the past buddha Kassapa, and retold by Gotama Buddha.

The nested account of Kassapa Buddha then returns to the shell story with king Kikī praising Ghaṭṭikāra [§21.11]. The whole account closes with king Kikī making a large offering to Ghaṭṭikāra [§§22-24], related to Ānanda by the Buddha. The story of the past buddha Kassapa ends here.

Then, the Buddha identifies himself as Jotipāla in the story [§25]. And the Sutta closes with the first narrator recording the audience’s approval [§26].

1.2.2 Here is a schematic representation of the narrative structure of the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta.³⁸

§1	Sutta opening	}	Narrator 1 “Ānanda”		
§2					
§3	Gotama Buddha admonishes Ānanda				
§4		}	Narrator 2 Gotama		
§5	<u>Nested story of Kassapa Buddha, told to Ānanda.</u>				
§6-18					
§18.2	Start of account of Ghaṭṭikāra : to Kikī.			}	Narrator 3 Kassapa
§19					
§20					
§21.10	End of account of Ghaṭṭikāra : to Kikī.			}	Narrator 2 Gotama
§21.11	King Kikī praises Ghaṭṭikāra.				
§22	King Kikī’s offerings to Ghaṭṭikāra.			}	Narrator 1
§23					
§24	End of Kasapa Buddha’s nested story.				
§25	The Buddha identifies himself as Jotipāla.				
§26	Conclusion.	→	Narrator 1		

Table 1.2.2 Narrative structure of the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta (M 81)

³⁷ **Perfections** (Skt *pāramitā*; P *pāramī*) are qualities developed by a bodhisattva as he grows to buddhahood. The older and better known set of **6 perfections** (*pāramitā*)—that of the Mahāyāna—comprise giving (*dāna*), moral virtue (*śīla*), patience (*kṣānti*), effort (*vīrya*), concentration (*dhyana*) and wisdom (*prajñā*). Daśa,bhūmika Sūtra gives a set of 10: to the original 6 are added: skillful means (*upāya*), vow (*prañidhāna*), power (*bala*) and knowledge (*jñāna*). The perfections are closely connected with the Mahāyāna **Bodhisattva doctrine** (orig 100 BC-100 CE), on account of various external influences (Dayal 1932:30-49). In Pali, **the 10 perfections** (*pāramī*) are giving (*dāna*), moral virtue (*śīla*), renunciation (*nekkhamma*), wisdom (*paññā*), effort (*virīya*), patience (*khanti*), truthfulness (*sacca*), determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*), lovingkindness (*mettā*), and equanimity (*upekkhā*). They are developed over many lives, as shown in Jātakas (esp the last 10 stories), Cariyā Piṭaka, and Buddha,vaṃsa. For important comy on the 10 perfections, see CA 275-332 (tr Bodhi, *The All-embracing Net of Views*, Kandy, 1978:43-49, 254-330).

³⁸ For a most complex 6-layered or nested narratives, see **Sāmāvatī Vatthu**, the story of Sāmāvatī (DhA 2.1-3), dealing with the fortunes of king Udena, his principal treasurer, and his three queen-consorts. See DhA:B 1:62 f.

1.2.3 An understanding of **the narrative structure of a sutta** keeps us connected with the level of the narration and context of the teaching or account. At the same time, we should be aware of the connecting thread that runs through all the layers of narratives. In the case of the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta, as the title suggests, the sutta centres around the “fierce friendship” or “tough love” between the potter Ghaṭikāra and the brahmin youth Jotipāla, despite their vast difference in social class. It is also about Ghaṭikāra’s spirituality—after all, he is a non-returner, which (on account of having overcome sensual lust) empowers him to live as a virtual monk. Yet, he is also able to fulfill his filial duties in caring for his blind aged parents. He does not really need to renounce the world, as he is already a member of the noble sangha—he is no more an “outsider” to the path.³⁹

1.3 PARALLEL TEXTS

1.3.1 The (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta has a Chinese parallel in the Madhyama Āgama.⁴⁰ The same story also recurs in the Mahāvastu of the Mahā,saṅghika-Lokōttara,vāda Vinaya, in the Saṅghabhedavastu of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivāda Vinaya, preserved in Sanskrit and Tibetan, and in a Chinese Avadāna collection.⁴¹ Furthermore, a few words of a version of this text have been preserved in Sanskrit fragments.⁴²

The (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta, its Madhyama Āgama parallel, and the Mahāvastu account begin by describing the Buddha giving a smile. Asked by Ananda for the reason,⁴³ the Buddha explains that in that very spot where they stand, the past buddha Kassapa once sat and taught his monks.⁴⁴

In the Saṅghabhedavastu, however, a smile by the Buddha does not provide the occasion for the delivery of the present story. Instead, the reason for relating the events of the time of the past buddha Kassapa

³⁹ An “outsider” (*bāhira*) refers to a Buddhist or practitioner who is not yet on the path, ie, a streamwinner, but include non-Buddhist, too. In (**Sotāpanna**) **Nandiya S** (S 55.40), it also incl streamwinners who do not progress further on the path: SD 47.1 (1.2.2). See also **Dakkhiṇa Vibhaṅga S** (M 142,5) + nn, SD 1,9.

⁴⁰ The parallel is MĀ 63 (T1.499a-503a), titled after Ghaṭikāra’s hometown 鞞婆陵耆經 *bīng pó líng qí jīng*. For a partial tr of MĀ 63, together with extracts from the present discussion, see Analayo 2009c. M 81 and MĀ 63 are both located in the chapter dedicated to the topic of “kings” in the Rāja Vagga of the Majjhima Nikāya and 王相應品 of the Madhyama Āgama. The (Mūla-)Sarvāstivāda Bhaiṣajyavastu (Dutt 1984a:217,12) also locates the present discourse in the Rāja Saṃyukta of the Madhyama Āgama. This placement is surprising in so far as the two main protagonists are a potter and a brahmin youth, neither of whom is a king (see Analayo 2011:6). Although the king of Kāśī also appears in the Sutta, he plays only a relatively minor role. The 佛光 *Fóguāng* Madhyama Āgama ed, in its intro, suggests that the present story was allocated to the chapter on kings in order to show how past and contemporary kings took refuge and accepted the Buddha’s teachings (歸敬如來過去及現世諸王之, 接受佛教 *guī jìng rúlái guò-qùjǐ xiànrshì zhū wáng zhī, jiē shòu fó jiào*) (Analayo 2011:17).

⁴¹ Mahāvastu (Basak 1963a:409-428; Senart 1882a:317-329) and Saṅgha,bheda,vastu (Gnoli 1978a:22-30), with its Tib counterpart (D (1) ’dul ba, ga 4a-10a or Q (1030) nge 3b-9a). The Chin Avadāna collection is 佛說興起行經 *fó shuō xīng qǐ xíng jīng*, a collection of 10 stories that explain the Buddha’s past bad karma, the relevant part being story 10 in T197 (T4.172c-174b).

⁴² The fragments are SHT X 3596 (p133) and the so far unpublished SHT XI 4607a, identified by Klaus Wille (Analayo 2011:441 n4). SHT XI 4607a corresponds to the beginning part of the discourse at §§1-5 [M 2:45]; SHT X 3596 parallels the final part of the discourse at §21 [M 2:53 f].

⁴³ T197 (T4.172c8) differs in reporting that the Buddha narrated the present story to Sāriputta instead of Ānanda.

⁴⁴ While M 81/2:45,11 refers to the location as Vebhaliṅga, the Mahāvastu (Basak 1963a: 412,10; Senart 1882a: 319,8) speaks of Mārakaraṇḍa, formerly called Veruḍiṅga. The Saṅgha,bheda,vastu (Gnoli 1978a:22,1) and the Bhaiṣajyavastu (Dutt 1984a:217,11) speak of Vaibhidiṅgī. See also D (1) ’dul ba, ga 4a1 or Q (1030) nge 3b3. According to Mahā,vastu (Basak 1963a:411,8; Senart 1882a:318,12), not only Kāśyapa Buddha, but also the two earlier Buddhas had been seated on the same spot. Oldenberg comments that the sudden appearance of three buddhas stands in contrast to the preceding account, which is concerned only with Kāśyapa Buddha. Hence this reference to three buddhas “appears to be a maladroit attempt to improve on this passage (*ein ungeschickter Versuch ... den Effekt zu steigern* [“a more awkward translation, ... with a worse impact”]) (1882a:318,12). Mus notes that refs to such locations used by past buddhas point to a simple form of cult, before sacred iconography and architecture became important (1935:481); see also Strong 2004:36-39.

was to explain to the monks Gotama's past karma that was responsible for his 6 years of painful asceticism during his quest for awakening.⁴⁵

1.3.2 In agreement with its parallels, the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta says that at the time of Kassapa Buddha there were two friends, a potter and a brahmin youth. The Majjhima Nikāya version introduces the potter as Ghaṭṭikāra and the brahmin youth as Jotipāla (later on identified as Gotama Buddha in a previous life).⁴⁶

The Mahāvastu story agrees with the Pali version on these two names,⁴⁷ while the Madhyama Āgama version and the Saṅghabhedavastu speak instead of the potter Nandīpāla and the brahmin youth Uttara.⁴⁸ When referring to Nandīpāla, the Saṅghabhedavastu says that he is a “maker of pots” (*ghaṭṭikāra*), which is his name in the Pali version.⁴⁹ The Chinese Avadāna account combines features from both of these two naming traditions, as it speaks of the potter Nandipala and his brahmin friend Jotipāla.⁵⁰

1.3.3 The different versions of the text describe how the potter Ghaṭṭikāra (or Nandīpāla) tried to convince his friend Jotipāla (or Uttara) to visit Kassapa Buddha.⁵¹ According to the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra

⁴⁵ Gnoli (1978a:21,31), with its Tib counterpart (D (1) 'dul ba, ga 3b6 or Q (1030) nge 3b1). The same is also implicit in T197 (T4.172c5), which gives the title of the present story as “discourse spoken by the Buddha on the causes in past existences [for his present undertaking of] ascetic practices,” 佛說苦行宿緣經 *fó shuō kǔ xíng sù yuán jīng*. On “Gotama Buddha's past karma,” see (5).

⁴⁶ While M:Ee 2:46,2 and M:Ce 2:404,23 spell his name as Ghaṭṭikāra, M:Be 2:236,27 and M:Se 2:375,11 refer to their protagonist as Ghaṭṭikāra.

⁴⁷ Ghaṭṭikāra and Jyotipala in Basak 1963a: 412,11+13; Senart 1882a: 319,9+11.

⁴⁸ MĀ 63 (T1.499b3): 難提婆羅 *nán tí bō luó* and (T1.499a28): 優多羅 *yōu duō luó* (another occurrence of the name Jotipāla in A 6.54/3:372,1 has as its counterpart 儲提摩麗 *chū tí mó lì* in MĀ 130 (T1.619c17)), Gnoli 1978a: 23,1: *uttara maṇava* and *nandīpāla ghaṭṭikāra*, with ts. Tib counterparts in D (1) 'dul ba, ga 4a6+2 or Q (1030) nge 3b8+4: bram ze'i khye'u bla ma and rdza mkhan dga' skyong. Bhaiṣajya,vastu (Dutt 1984a:217,12) refers to the present discourse as the Nandīpāla Sūtra and on p261,20 introduces Uttara as a past life of the Buddha as a brahmin youth at the time of Kassapa Buddha. The name Uttara for the same past life of Gotama Buddha recurs also in Avadānaśataka (eg Speyer 1906: 239,7, id, 1909:23,5, 51,8, and 88,1, or in Vaidya 1958a:105,20, 184,21, 196,23, and 212,30), and in refs to the present discourse found, eg, in Divyāvadāna (Cowell 1886:347,11 or Vaidya 1999: 215,12) and *Mahāprajñāpāramitā(upadeśa-)śāstra (T1509 (T25.261c14), tr in Lamotte 1970:1778). A past life of the Bodhisattva as a brahmin youth by the name of Uttara who goes forth as a monk is also recorded in B 12.11-12/53,21 and J 1:37,31, although, according to these sources, this occurred in the time of the past Buddha Sumedha. Clearly, this Uttara is not Jotipāla.

⁴⁹ Gnoli 1978a:26,19: *nandīpālo nāma ghaṭṭikāra*. Bhaiṣajyavastu (Dutt 1984a:217,12) also speaks of *nandīpālo ghaṭṭikāro*; and D (1) 'dul ba, ga 4a2 or Q (1030) nge 3b4 of rdza mkhan dga' skyong. On the potter in ancient India, see, eg, Auboyer 1962:125 f.

⁵⁰ T197 (T4.172c13) speaks of Nandīpāla, 難提婆羅 *nán tí pó luó*, a potter's son, 瓦師子 *wǎ shī zǐ*, but gives the name of his brahmin friend as 火鬘 *huǒ mán*, which, according to Akanuma (1930:251) stands for Jotipāla. Karashima (2006:361) notes another rendering of Jotipāla or Jyotipala as 焰鬘, found in DĀ 3 (T1.31b23), where the use of the character 鬘 *mán* “indicates that -pāla (‘guard’) had become -māla (= *mālā*, ‘wreath, garland’).” The same appears to be the case for the second character in the rendering adopted in T197.

⁵¹ MĀ 63 (T1.500a12) and the Saṅgha,bheda,vastu in Gnoli 1978a:23,9 and D (1) 'dul ba, ga 5a1 or Q (1030) nge 4b1 indicate that Ghaṭṭikāra was just coming from the presence of Kassapa Buddha when he met his friend Jotipāla, who was driving in his chariot out of town with other brahmin youths. According to the Skt text of Saṅgha,bheda,vastu, Jotipāla wanted to teach the other brahmin youths the reciting of brahminical hymns (Gnoli (1978a: 23,13): *brāhmaṇakān mantrān vācayitukāmaḥ*), while the Tib version (D (1) 'dul ba, ga 5a2 or Q (1030) nge 4b3) only indicates that he “wanted to make the brahmins (the brahmin youths) recite, “bram ze (Q adds: khye'u) nams klog tu 'jug par 'dod nas. In MĀ 63 (T1.500a15), Jotipāla wanted to instruct them to recite brahminical “scriptures,” 令讀梵志書 *lìng dú fàn zhì shū* (according to Hirakawa 1997:613 and Soothill 1937:326, 書 *shū* renders √LIKH (to write), *lekha* (“writing”), and *pustaka* (“book”). In regard to a comparable reference in D 27/3:94,18 to *gantha* (a term that usually means “book”) as a brahminical occupation, Gombrich 1990b:27 notes that in Sn 2.7/302 and 306 “Brahmins are said to ‘knot together mantras’—the words are *mante ganthetva*—and the reference is to their composing Vedic texts.” The same sense would underlie the reference to ‘making books,’ *ganthe karontā*, in D 27, or to “scriptures,” 書 *shū*, in MĀ 63, in the sense of oral composition or recitation.

Sutta and its Madhyama Āgama parallel, Jotipāla was disinclined to visit Kassapa Buddha, a mere “bald-headed recluse.”⁵² The Madhyama Āgama text, the Saṅghabhedavastu, and the Chinese Avadāna account report that Jotipāla expressed his disbelief in Kassapa Buddha’s awakening, which in his view required the undertaking of ascetic practices.⁵³

The Saṅghabhedavastu, in agreement with the Chinese, Pali, and Tibetan Avadāna collections, notes that Jotipāla’s disdain for Kassapa’s awakening had dire karmic repercussions.⁵⁴ Gotama, in his last birth, as the Bodhosattva, as a result of this past deed, had to undertake ascetic practices for 6 years before reaching liberation, thereby, apparently, having to prove to himself that such practices were not really required for awakening.⁵⁵

1.4 SUTTA THEMES

1.4.1 Skillful means. According to the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta, when the potter’s repeated invitations to visit Kassapa Buddha meet with Jotipāla’s firm rejection, (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Suggests that they go and bathe in the river instead. While the Madhyama Āgama version and the Saṅghabhedavastu do not record this interlude, the Mahāvastu and the Chinese Avadāna account proceed similarly to the Pali Sutta. The Mahāvastu indicates that the idea to go and bathe had come to Ghaṭikāra as a **skillful means**, since the bathing-place is close to Kassapa Buddha’s residence.⁵⁶

1.4.2 The layman saint

1.4.2.1 In the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta and its Madhyama Āgama parallel do not highlight the fact that Jotipāla was a past life of Gotama Buddha. In fact, the Buddha’s past life as Jotipāla, unlike his past

⁵² M 81/2:46,11: “what [use] of seeing that little bald headed recluse,” *kim pana tena muṇḍakena samanakena diṭṭhenāti?* MĀ 63 (T1.500a21): “I do not want to see the bald headed recluse,” 禿頭沙門。我不欲見 *tū tóu shā mén, wǒ bù yù jiàn*. On the term *muṇḍa*, see also Tedesco 1945.

⁵³ MĀ 63 (T1.500a21): “the bald recluse will not be able to attain the path, since the path is to be attained [through what is] difficult,” 禿沙門不應得道，難得故 *tū shā mén bù yīng dé dào, nán dé gù*, see also T197 (T4.172c23). The ref to “difficult,” 難 *nán*, in MĀ 63 and T197 might intend *duṣkara*, as suggested by the parallel passage in Saṅgha, bheda, vastu (Gnoli 1978a:23,19: *kutas tasmin muṇḍake śramaṇake bodhiḥ, bodhir hi paramaduṣkarā*), a term that recurs in Gnoli 1978a: 21,31 in relation to the Buddha’s practice of austerities for six years (*ṣaḍvarsāṇi duṣkaram caritam*). The standard rendering for the second instance of *duṣkaracaryā* in the sense of “ascetic practice,” however, would be 苦行 *kū xíng*, see, eg, MĀ 152 (T1.669b19), discussed in Analayo 2011:576 n 238. According to D (1) ’dul ba, ga 5a6 or Q (1030) nge 4b7, Uttara similarly considered awakening to be very “difficult,” *byang chub ni mchog tu dka’ ba’o*, using the same expression as found at D (1) ’dul ba, ga 3b7 or Q (1030) nge 3b1 to refer to the Buddha’s six years of austerities, *lo drug tu dka’ ba*.

⁵⁴ Regarding the term *apadāna*, Cutler (1994:5) notes an occurrence in D 27/3:90,14, where *apadāna* “is used with the meaning of ‘cutting (in an agricultural sense) or reaping’.” Cutler concludes that the nuance of “reapings” enables us to understand the *apadana*-s as stories to illustrate the reaping in a present life of the fruit (*phala*) or result of good or bad deeds performed in the past” (1994:6). For another shade of meaning, see Neelis 2008:152, who notes the existence of a type of Avadāna that are a collection of edifying narratives without references to any story of the past. Another point relevant to an appreciation of this genre of texts is the suggestion by Granoff 1996: 88 that Avadāna stories may have been meant specifically for a monastic audience.

⁵⁵ The Saṅgha, bheda, vastu (Gnoli 1978a: 21,31) and its Tib counterpart (D (1) ’dul ba, ga 3b7 or Q (1030) nge 3b1), the Chinese Avadāna account, T197 (T4.173c24 and T4.174a3-5 in verse), and Therāpadāna (Ap 39:92-93/-1:300 f); for a corresponding Skt fragment and its Tib counterpart, see Bechert 1961:238-239. Bhaiṣajyavastu (Dutt 1984a:217,15) also considers Gotama’s ascetic practices to be the karmic result of his past life as Uttara (or Jotipāla), see also the Bodhisattvavadāna-kalpalatā résumé in Mitra (1882:58). On this motif, see also Cutler 1997:73, Hara 1997:250-253, Guang Xing 2002a:21, Strong 2001:33, and Walters 1990:77. Upāyakaūśalya Sūtra goes further and suggests that the Bodhisattva’s reluctance was only a skilful means to convince some friends to visit Kassapa Buddha as well, T310 (T11.602b3): see also Tatz 1994:62-65.

⁵⁶ Mvst says near the forest, there is a lotus pond named Sumukā (Mvst 1:320). Basak 1963a:414,1; Senart 1882a: 320,7: “what, now, may be the means,” *ko nu khalu syād upāyo* (by which to get Jyotipāla to approach Kāśyapa Buddha)?

lives as Mahā Sudassana and as Ma(k)ha,deva, has not even found its way into the Jātaka collection⁵⁷ [4.4.3.1].

1.4.2.2 The central theme of the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta appears to be rather the contrast between the potter Ghaṭikāra and Kikī the king of Kāsī, in the sense that due to his spiritual virtues, Ghaṭikāra is a better supporter than the country's king himself. The Sutta depicts his spiritual qualities in a developmental sequence, serving a sort of didactic function.

Thus, the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta depicts Ghaṭikāra as an ideal layman [§§18.6-8], then as a streamwinner [§18.7-8], who lives a virtually monastic life [§§18.9-12], who fulfils his filial duty by supporting his blind parents [§19.13]. Above all this, he is a non-returner, a noble saint, a member of the arya-sangha [§18.14]. From the perspective of the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta and its Madhyama Āgama parallel, even as **a layman**, Ghaṭikāra is far superior to even the king of the country.

1.4.2.3 However, Ghaṭikāra is more than being merely an “ideal” layman: he is layman saint, a non-returner. We could say that, properly speaking, the ideal layman is also a saint: he is **a noble layman**, a true individual (*sappurisa*). Only such saints are not “outsiders” (*bahiraka*)⁵⁸ to the path of awakening.

1.4.2.4 Impressed by Kassapa Buddha's description of the virtues of Ghaṭikāra, king Kikī sends Ghaṭikāra “500 cart-loads of husked rice, and sacks of yellow rice, and appropriate curry ingredients to go with them” [§22]. Ghaṭikāra, however, politely refuses to accept them, saying that he has enough for all his needs.

1.4.3 The Bodhisattva career

1.4.3.1 The Chinese **Avadāna** gives a different account of Jotipāla's first meeting with Kassapa Buddha [1.1.3.6]. It reports how Jotipāla notices that Kassapa has thirty of the 32 marks of a great man (*mahā, purisa, lakkhaṇa*) and requests, in verse, to be shown the remaining two.⁵⁹ On ascertaining that Kassapa has all the 32 marks, Jotipāla is filled with faith. Kassapa then gives him a description of the conduct of a bodhisattva,⁶⁰ hearing which Jotipāla has to confess that he has not kept up such a conduct.⁶¹

1.4.3.2 In this way, the Chinese Avadāna story focuses on the meeting between Jotipāla and Kassapa Buddha as a stage in **the Bodhisattva career** of the future Buddha Gotama. Quite probably due to taking this perspective, the Chinese Avadāna account does not cover the later events described in the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta and its other parallel events in which Jotipāla no longer plays a role.

1.4.3.3 The Mahāvastu continues differently, as it relates how the monk Jyotipāla (Jotipāla) develops the aspiration to become a future buddha. Through telepathy, Kāśyapa (Kassapa) Buddha becomes aware of this and calls Jyotipāla to his presence, informing the young monk that he should first acquire merit by making offerings to the Buddha and the monastic community (Mvst 1:331).⁶² Once Jyotipāla has carried out this instruction, Kāśyapa Buddha predicts that Jyotipāla is destined to become a buddha, a proclamation repeated by the gods of various celestial realms up to and including the brahma world.

In this way, the Mahāvastu account presents the events described in the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta from the perspective of the Bodhisattva's career. This shift of emphasis finds its explicit expression in the sutta's title in the Mahāvastu, where the “Ghaṭikāra discourse” has become the “Jyotipāla discourse” (Skt **Jyoti, pāla Sūtra**) (Mvst 1:335).⁶³

⁵⁷ This has already been noted by Oldenberg 1912b:189. The counterparts to the past lives of the Buddha, depicted in **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17) and **Makha,deva S** (M 83), are **Mahā Sudassana J** (J 95/1:391-393), and **Makha,deva J** (J 9/1:137-139). For a more detailed examination of the *jātaka* nature of the present story, see Analayo 2010f:74-84. See also **Rebirth in early Buddhism**, SD 57.1.

⁵⁸ On the “outsiders,” see **Dakkhiṇa Vibhaṅga S** (M 142,5(11)) & nn, SD 1.9; also SD 47.1 (1.1.2).

⁵⁹ T197 (T4.173a19), which, in some ways, parallels **Brahmāyū S** (M 91,28-30/2:143).

⁶⁰ T197 (T4.173b9).

⁶¹ T197 (T4.173b20).

⁶² Basak 1963a:431,3; Senart 1882a:331,12 list robes and a golden basket as offerings to be made (*suvarṇa, pīṭhakaṃ duṣya, yugam*). BHSD: 346 sv *pīṭhaka* indicates that *pīṭhaka* could be an error for *piṭaka* and suggests the translation “basket.”

⁶³ Basak 1963a:436,5; Senart 1882a:335,8: *jyotipāla sūtra*. The same would also be implicit in the placing of this episode within what, according to Hiraoka, would have been the original overall structural pattern of the Mahāvastu,

1.5 RELATED SUTTAS

1.5.1 There are two closely related suttas dealing with Ghaṭikāra in the Saṃyutta Nikāya, that is, **the (Gāthā) Ghaṭikāra Sutta** (S 1.50), comprising an exchange of verses between the brahma Ghaṭikāra and the Buddha, and **the (Brahmā) Ghaṭikāra Sutta** (S 2.24) which is the same sutta with a short introduction. The brahma Ghaṭikāra appears to our Buddha, declaring that there are seven monks who are reborn in Avihā (the first of the 5 heavens of the Pure Abodes),⁶⁴ and they renew their ancient friendship.⁶⁵

1.5.2 According to **the Brahmā Sahampati Sutta** (S 48.57), a certain Sahaka was an elder monk disciple of Kassapa Buddha. He had perfected the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'indriya*), and “had eliminated sensual desires.” This may mean that he has attained non-return, but this is not stated so in the Sutta. The Sutta, however, goes on to say that Sahaka is Brahmā Sahampatī. As such, it is unlikely that he is the same person as Brahmā Ghaṭikāra.⁶⁶

2 Kassapa Buddha

2.1 HAGIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

2.1.1 The 24 buddhas. Kassapa Buddha is the buddha just before our Gotama Buddha. Chronologically, he is the latest (the 24th) of the 24 past Buddhas,⁶⁷ the third buddha of the present aeon (called the “fortunate aeon,” *bhadda,kappa*, because it has 4 buddhas),⁶⁸ and the 6th of the 7 buddhas mentioned in **the Mahā'padāna Sutta** (D 14).⁶⁹ He is also called Kassapa Dasa,bala (“Kassapa of the 10 powers”)⁷⁰ to distinguish him from other Kassapas, especially those who are monks (like Mahā Kassapa). Kassapa is actually his clan (*gotta*) name (like Gotama). We do not know his given name (which is Siddhattha in the case of Gotama).⁷¹

2.1.2 Kassapa Buddha's life

2.1.2.1 Kassapa was born in the deer park at Isipatana, outside **Benares**, of brahmin parents, Brahma,datta and the lady Dhana,vatī, belonging to the **Kassapa** clan (*kassapa,gotta*). He is said to be 20 hands tall.⁷² His life-span was 20,000 years,⁷³ and for 2000 years, in his youth, he lived a household life in

in that the Jyotipāla Sūtra originally would have come directly after the accounts of previous predictions of Gautama's future buddhahood by the earlier Buddhas Dīpaṅkara and Maṅgala, while the intervening stories about the Buddha in Vaiśālī (P *Vesālī*) are a later addition (2002:355). See also Dutt 1956:147 f.

⁶⁴ These are inhabited only by non-returners. For full list, see SD 1.7 (Table 1.7).

⁶⁵ Respectively, S 170*-182*/1.50/1:35 f (SD 49.13b) and S 347/2.24/1:60 (SD 49.13a).

⁶⁶ See **Brahmā Sahampatī S** (S 48.57), SD 86.10.

⁶⁷ The last 24 buddhas, from Dīpaṅkara to Kassapa (all of whom confirmed Gotama's future buddhahood), are better known in Comys (J 1:28-45; ApA 32-51; DhA 1:83; BA 131 f; CA 15). There were 3 other buddhas (B ch 26) even before these 24 past buddhas (with our Gotama as the 25th), but the 3 buddhas lived before Gotama aspired to become buddha. Thus, we have a total of 28 past buddhas, all of whom are mentioned in DA 2:410. On the 24 and the 28 buddhas, see SD 36.2 (3.3+3.4) (with a chronology of all these buddhas).

⁶⁸ These 4 buddhas together with 3 more preceding them, called the 7 buddhas, are an ancient list: see SD 36.2 (3.2).

⁶⁹ D 14,1.4/2:1 (SD 49.8).

⁷⁰ On the buddha's 10 powers (*dasa,bala*), see **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,9-21) + SD 49.1 (3.5).

⁷¹ For a summary of Kassapa Buddha's life, see J 1:43.

⁷² A “**hand**” (*hattha*) is the distance between the elbow and the middle-finger tip (ie the forearm) (J 1:34, 233), ie about 45 cm or 18 ins. Then, 20 hands would be 900 cm (9 m = 29.5 ft) tall! Gotama Buddha is traditionally said to be 18 hands tall (8.1 m = 26.6 ft). These ancient measurements are problematic. If we assume that our Buddha were about 6 ft tall, by way of ratio, we might estimate that Kassapa would be about 6.6 feet tall. However, the numbers grow exponentially for the other buddhas, so that Dīpaṅkara is 80 hands (36 m = 118.1 ft)! We could assume that humans of those distant past were giants, or we must allow latitude for such accounts as being more instructive than they are historical. See B:H xxxii. On how the historical Buddha probably looks like, see Reflection R135b, “What the Buddha really looks like,” 2010.

⁷³ This was the normal human life-span at that time. See SD 9 (9.1).

three different palaces, Hamsa, Yasa and Sirinanda.⁷⁴ His harem had 84,000 women, and his chief wife was Sunandā, by whom he had a son, Vijita, sena.

2.1.2.2 After seeing **the 4 sights**⁷⁵ and his new-born son, Kassapa decided to renounce the world. At once, it is said, a heavenly palace (*pāsāda*) appeared in the heavens spinning like a giant wheel, with a banyan (*nigrodha*) (his Bodhi-tree) at the centre of its grounds. Therein, he renounced the world and lived, practising austerities for only seven days. Just before his great awakening, his erstwhile wife gave him a meal of milk-rice, and a corn-field watchman (*yava, pāla*) named Soma gave him grass for his seat.

2.1.3 Kassapa Buddha's teaching

2.1.3.1 Kassapa Buddha's first spiritual "breakthrough" (*abhisamaya*)⁷⁶ for beings was when he gave his first sermon at Isipatana, when 200 billion⁷⁷ beings benefitted. His second breakthrough was during his 4-month Dharma tour from which benefitted 100 billion⁷⁸ beings. And his third breakthrough was when he performed the twin wonder⁷⁹ at the foot of an Indian laurel tree,⁸⁰ outside the city of Sundarā, and benefitted 50 billion beings.⁸¹ Amongst his most famous conversions was that of a ferocious cannibal, the yaksha Naradeva.

2.1.3.2 He held only one **assembly** (*samāgama*) for his arhat disciples. His chief monk disciples were Tissa and Bhāradvāja among monks, and of the nuns, Anulā and Uruvelā. His personal attendant was Sabbamitta. Among his patrons, the most eminent were male lay-disciples Sumaṅgala and Ghaṭṭikāra [3], and the female lay-disciples, Vijitasenā and Bhaddā.

Kassapa Buddha held the uposatha only once every six months (ThaA 1:62).⁸² And *uposatha*, that is, the observance or ecclesiastical conclave to recite the monastic code (*pāṭimokkha*).

Among those who attained arhathood under Kassapa Buddha were **Gavesī**, who, with his five hundred followers, strove always to excel themselves until they attained their goal, as stated in **the Gavesi Sutta** (A 5.180)⁸³

2.1.3.3 All buddhas teach the same Dharma, although their methods may sometimes seem to vary. They all teach, for example, the 4 noble truths and dependent arising.⁸⁴

⁷⁴ BA 217 calls the first two palaces Hamsavā and Yasavā.

⁷⁵ **The 4 sights** (*catu nimitta*) are those of an old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a recluse: see **Mahā'padāna S** (D 14.2.6-14), SD 49.8 & **Sukhumāla S** (A 3.38/1:145 f) + SD 1.1 (3.2).

⁷⁶ "Breakthrough" (*abhisamaya*) here means the full and direct penetration of the 4 noble truths by the streamwinner (S 5:441). Comys gloss the term as "realization" (*paṭivedha*) (PmA 3:686), often in the phrase "penetration of the Dharma" (*dhammābhisamaya*) (S 2:134; BA 127). See **Abhisamaya Saṃyutta** (S 13/2:133-139) and **Abhisamaya Kathā** (Pm 3.3/2:214 ff).

⁷⁷ *Vīsati, koṭi, sahasānam* = 20 × 10,000,000 × 1,000 = 200,000,000,000, ie, 200 billion. The ancient story-tellers were often hyperbolic about number. A "crore" (10 million) should be taken simply as "a huge number." On **number symbolism** in early Buddhism, see SD 49.8 (16).

⁷⁸ *Dasa, koṭi, sahasānam*, ie 10,000 crores. Such huge numbers are likely to be ancient Indian hyperbole, simply meaning, "a huge number," relative to its context. It prob reflected a time when the science of numbers arising in the Indian consciousness, so that, in a literary and religious way, they seem magical, and helpful in imagining the immeasurability of religious and spiritual matters.

⁷⁹ **The twin wonder** (*yamaka, pāṭihāriya*) is a psychic phenomena performed only by the Buddha, where fine jets of fire and of water shoot out from each of his pores, dancing around his body, forming a magnificent mandorla enveloping him (MA 2:184; UA 51; BA 8; J 1:77): see **Miraculous Stories**, SD 27.5b (3.1.2).

⁸⁰ The Indian laurel, a large tree, **Terminalia tomentosa**, locally called asna, growing up to 30 m high with a trunk diameter of 1 m. Its stem stores water which is tapped by forest folk during summer. Its hard wood is used for furniture, panelling veneer, rail cross-ties, and boat-building.

⁸¹ *Pañca, koṭi, sahasānam*, ie, 5,000 crores.

⁸² See SD 9 (9.1).

⁸³ A 5.180/3:214-218 (SD 47.16).

⁸⁴ See eg (**Dasa, bala**) **Kassapa S** (S 12.9/2:9): see SD 49.9 (4.3). The ch (**Nidāna Saṃyutta**) lists the same teaching on dependent arising by **the 7 buddhas**, Vipassī (S 12.4), Sikhī (S 12.5), Vessabhū (S 12.6), Kakusandha (S 12.7), Koṇāgamana (S 12.8), Kassapa (S 12.9), and Gotama (S 12.10).

2.1.4 Kassapa Buddha's passing away

2.1.4.1 After having lived for 20,000 years (B 25.43), he died in the Setavya park at **Setavyā** in Kāsī. His relics were enshrined in a stupa one league high, made of bricks, each of gold and jewels worth one crore (B 25.52).

2.1.4.2 The Majjhima Commentary says that there was a great difference of opinion as to what should be the size of **the reliquary shrine** (*cetiya*) of Kassapa Buddha and of what material it should be constructed. When these issues were finally settled and the work of building started, the people found they had not enough money to complete it.

Then, a non-returner lay-disciple, named Sorata (or Yasodhara, SA 1:189), went all over Jambu, dīpa (ancient India), enlisting the help of the people for the building of the shrine. He sent the money as he received it, and on hearing that the work was completed, he set out to go and worship at the shrine; but he was attacked by robbers in the forest.

The robbers gouged out his eyes, and then killed him. It is said that the robber themselves then lost their sight and wandered about in the forest, which came to be known as **Andha, vana**, “blind men’s forest.”⁸⁵ It has retained this name down to our Buddha Gotama’s time.

It was about 3 km south of Sāvathī, and during our Buddha Gotama’s time, it was protected by the king’s guards. (SA 1:167).

2.1.4.3 The four gateways of Kassapa’s reliquary shrine (*dhātu, ghara cetiya*) were built, one by Kikī, one by his son Pathavindhara, one by his courtiers (*āmacca*) led by his general, and the last by his subjects (*jānapada*) led by the treasurer. They built it of precious stones, gold bricks and ornamental stones. (SnA 1:194)

The Dhammapada Commentary (DhA 9.8a) gives another account of the building of Kassapa’s shrine.⁸⁶

2.1.4.4 **The Dhammapada Commentary** (DhA 14.9) contains a story, which seems to indicate that, near the village of Todeyya, there was a shrine regarded as that of Kassapa Buddha, and deeply revered by the inhabitants of the village.⁸⁷

2.2 MONKS CONNECTED WITH KASSAPA BUDDHA AND HIS TEACHINGS

2.2.1 Mahā Kappina, then a clansman, built, for Kassapa’s monks, a cloistered quarters (*pariveṇa*) with one thousand cells (ApA 497).

2.2.2 Bakkula’s persistent good health and great longevity were due to the fact that he had given the first fruits of his harvest to Kassapa’s monks (MA 4:106).

2.2.3 Once, our Bodhisattva was born into a musician family, and he was named **Guttila**, who himself became a master musician. He remained single and celibate, and supported his blind parents (like Ghaṭikāra). When he was brought up to Sakra’s heaven of the 33, he learned how thirty-seven goddesses had attained their rebirth there. One had, in her previous life, offered a five-finger fragrant print⁸⁸ at Kassapa Buddha’s shrine: this was her past good karma that brought her the heavenly rebirth (J 243).⁸⁹

Upavāna, in a previous birth, became the guardian deity of the shrine; hence, his great majesty in his last life (DA 2:580).

2.2.4 Mahā Kaccāna won his golden complexion on account of his gift of a golden brick to the building of Kassapa’s shrine (AA 1:205). At the same shrine, **Anuruddha**, who was then a householder in Benares, offered butter and molasses in bowls of brass, which were placed closely together, one after another, around the shrine (AA 1:185).

⁸⁵ MA 2:122-124; DhA 2:49; VA 3:662.

⁸⁶ **Kukkuṭa, mitta Nesāda Vatthu** (DhA 9.8a/3:29-31).

⁸⁷ DhA 14.9/3:249-253.

⁸⁸ “Five-finger fragrant print” (*gandha, pañc’āṅgulika*), a mark made by the spread hand (which had been dipped) in a fragrant substance (Vv 33.47; VvA 147,4; MA 2:261,10; DhA 3:374,9; J 2:256,2). Recounted in **Guttila Vimāna, vatthu** (Vv 369/33.47/43).

⁸⁹ **Guttila J** (J 243/2:256).

2.2.5 It is said that **Kimbila** was a monk in Kassapa Buddha's time, and remembered the decline of this Buddha's dispensation. In his last life, he questions Gotama Buddha on the conditions for Dharma-ending, which is preserved in three suttas, **the (Pañcaka) Kimbila Sutta** (A 5.201), **the (Chakka) Kimbila Sutta** (A 6.40), and **the (Sattaka) Kimbila Sutta** (A 7.56).⁹⁰

2.2.6 The Lakkhaṇa Saṃyutta (S 19) contains four accounts of beings (clearly pretas), seen by Moggallāna, suffering their painful fruits of their bad karma done in the time of Kassapa Buddha.⁹¹

2.3 Kassapa Buddha's teachings remembered in Gotama's time

2.3.1 During the time of **Kassapa Buddha**, an ascetic named Tissa put the same question to Kassapa. Tissa later became Kassapa's chief disciple. In relating their dialogue, the Buddha expounded **the Āmagandha Sutta** (Sn 2.2)⁹² to Āmagandha. Convinced and converted, Āmagandha and his followers joined the order and a few days later became arhats. (SnA 1:280-283)

2.3.2 Besides the Āmagandha Sutta, various other teachings are mentioned as having been first taught by Kassapa and handed on down to the time of Gotama and re-taught by him. The teachings include the questions (*pucchā*) of the yaksha **Āḷavaka** (Sn 1.10)⁹³ and of **Sabhiya** (Sn 3.6).⁹⁴

The stanzas taught to **Suta,soma** (J 537) by the brahmin Nanda of Takkaṣilā,⁹⁵ and **the Mitta,vinda Jātaka** (J 104) are said to belong to the days of Kassapa Buddha.⁹⁶

2.3.3 A discourse attributed to Kassapa, when he once visited Benares with twenty-thousand monks, is included in the story of **the novice Paṇḍita** (DhA 6.5). It was on this occasion that Kassapa Buddha accepted alms from the beggar Mahā,duggata in preference to those offered by the king and the nobles.⁹⁷

Some teachings by Kassapa Buddha were, after his passing, faintly recalled by various beings, who then requested Gotama Buddha to teach them again.⁹⁸ **The yaksha Āḷavaka**, as a child, was taught 8 questions and answers they had learnt from Kassapa Buddha. As time passed, they forgot the answers, but it is said that he had preserved the questions written in vermilion on a golden scroll, kept in a cave.⁹⁹

2.4 CLUES TO KASSAPA BUDDHA'S TIME

2.4.1 After the disappearance of Kassapa's teaching, a class of religious persons called the "lineage of white-clad recluses" (*seta,vattha samaṇa,vamsa*) tried to revive it but without success.¹⁰⁰

2.4.2 According to Saṃyutta Commentary, in the time of Kassapa Buddha (who came immediately before our own Buddha Gotama), the Boar-dug Cave (*sūkara,khata,leṇa*, on the side of Mt Vulture Peak, outside Rāja,gaha) was a hollow in the ground, when the earth was yet growing. In our Buddha's time, the cave entrance was high up on the hill-side and was deep.¹⁰¹

According to the Majjhima Commentary, between the times of Kassapa Buddha and Gotama Buddha, the surface of the earth grew enough to cover the Boar-dug Cave, on the side of Mount Vulture Peak (MA 3:203). Such remarks are interesting in that they reflect an awareness that the earth as a whole was still evolving. However, more research is needed to find out if the ancient texts or teachers knew or mentioned continental drift.¹⁰²

⁹⁰ Respectively, A 5.201, SD 106.12; A 6.40, SD 106.13; A 7.56, SD 106.14.

⁹¹ S 19.12+17+18+19+20+21 (S 2:260-262).

⁹² Sn 14/2.2/239-252 (SD 4.24(3.1)).

⁹³ Sn 10/1.10/181-208.

⁹⁴ Sn 32/3.6/510-547 (SD 77.8).

⁹⁵ **Suta,soma J** (J 537/5:456-511).

⁹⁶ **Mitta,vinda J** (J 104/1:413 f).

⁹⁷ DhA 6.5/2:126-139.

⁹⁸ Eg, MA:SHB 1:107, 528; AA:SHB 1:423.

⁹⁹ **Āḷavaka S** (S 10.12/1:213-215 = Sn 1.10/181-192/31-33).

¹⁰⁰ DA 3:899; MA 4:116; VbhA 432.

¹⁰¹ SA 3:249; also DA 3:882; MA 3:203; AA 1:161; DhA 1:96; UA 189; ThaA 3:95; ApA 212. Its entrance (*dvāra*) is mentioned as DA 3:883; MA 4:87; SA 2:234; AA 2:136. Its slope (*pabbhāra*) is mentioned at DA 2:418.

¹⁰² SA 3:249. See SD 16.15 (3.2); SD 36.2 (3.1.2).

3 Key names, terms and words

3.1 VEHA,LIŅGA is mentioned in the Pali canon only in the story of Ghāṭikāra, as the place where he lived. The Sinhala manuscript spells it as Vaha,liṅga—where *veha* could mean “sky-goer, especially as *viha,ga*,” and *liṅga* means “mark, characteristic”—so that the name means “birds’ sign.” The PTS, Khmer, and Siamese manuscripts give the reading *vebha,liṅga*, while the Burmese reading is *vega,liṅga*—both of which are obscure.

All we know from the suttas is that Vaha,liṅga was a wealthy and prosperous market-town (*nigama*), where the potter Ghāṭikāra and his friend, Jotipāla, lived during the time of Kassapa Buddha (the buddha just before our Gotama Buddha) [§6]. While Kassapa Buddha was residing there [§3.2], Ghāṭikāra brought Jotipāla to see the Buddha, Jotipāla, listening to the Buddha’s teaching, renounced the world. [§11]

Vehaliṅga is also mentioned in the verses of **the (Gāthā) Ghāṭikāra Sutta** (S 1.50) and **the (Brahmā) Ghāṭikāra Sutta** (S 2.24) which repeats the verses of the previous sutta.¹⁰³

3.2 SOTTI, translated here as a “back-scrubber,” and found in the dvandva (twin compound) “back-scrubber and bath-poweder” (*sotti,sināni*)¹⁰⁴ [§6.8]. It is probably a synonym of *sutti*, which in Sanskrit is *śukti*, meaning “pearl-oyster, shell-shell; Tamarindus indica; any kind of perfume or fragrant substance,” (SED). Clearly, it is some kind of implement or appliance which is used to wash or scrub oneself.

The Commentaries say that it is made from a string of balls of *kuruvindaka* powder (a mineral, probably cinnabar) made by grinding vermilion chunams¹⁰⁵ and stones with lac dyes, and holding both ends of the string of balls. It is used for rubbing the body while bathing.¹⁰⁶ The Pali-English Dictionary (PED) conjectures the meaning as “shell.”¹⁰⁷

3.3 YĀV’ETAD-OHI’PI

3.3.1 The phrase *yāv’etad-ohi’pi*,¹⁰⁸ “(to go) as far as this” [§9.3] occurs only here: this is technically known as a hapax legomenon (a reading that occurs only once in a text). The Commentary glosses it as “to such an extreme” (*yāv’eta,paramam*) (MA 3:281), meaning: “Besides trying to persuade me and taking me by the waist-band, do you really have to go as far as taking me by the hair, to make me go there?”

3.3.2 The Critical Pali Dictionary (CPD), in its entry on **etad-oh**, under “Rem[ark]” gives us this helpful note. While there can be no doubt about the general meaning of *yāv’etad-ohi*, which is found only in the exchange of words between Jotipāla and Ghāṭikāra, the derivation of the word remains uncertain. In the tradition as preserved in the Majjhima Commentary, *-do, hi* and *pi* are interpreted as “particles” (see CPD above here) which suggests that there was no certainty about the actual derivation of the word.

It is possible that the phrase is the same as the Sanskrit **yāvad-etad-avadhi* (Monier Williams in SED lists *etad-āvadhi*, indeclinable, “to this limit, so far,” without references [cf *tad-avadhi*, “up to that period,” quoted on the authority of Prof H H Wilson]), but the variant reading *yāvetādohi* might suggest that we see *-ado/-ādo* as a misunderstood ablative ending (= *-ato/-āto*), cf Prakrit *edādo* (Pischel *Grammatik*, 1900 §426); cf BHS *yāvad etto pi* and see BHSD sv *etto*; the reading in Be (*yāvatā do hi pi*) is presumably an editorial “correction” of *yāveta* to *yāvatā* when *do, hi* and *pi* had been interpreted as “particles.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ Respectively, S 177/1.50/1:35 and S 347/2.24/1:60.

¹⁰⁴ Also at **M 93**,10/2:151 (SD 40a.2); **M 96**,15/2:182 (SD 37.9); **A 3.70**,5.2/1:208,4 (SD 4.18).

¹⁰⁵ **Chunam** (*cuṇṇa*). OED: “Cement or plaster largely used in India, made of shell-lime and sea-sand.” Or, “Lime used esp with betel leaf to make pan.” (“Pan” (pa:n) is the betel leaf as well as its preparation with lime, etc, when chewed up into a reddish pulp.) Here, *cuṇṇa* is simply “powder used, mixed with water, for washing” (DP sv).

¹⁰⁶ **Sottin** “*ii kuruvindaka,sottim. Kuruvindaka,pāsāna,cuṇṇena hi saddhim lākham yojetvā maṇike katvā vijjhivā suttena āvunivā tam maṇi kalāpa,pantim ubhato gahetvā piṭṭhim ghamṣenti* (AA 2:323,4); **sotti** *nāma kuruvinda,-pāsāna,cuṇṇāni lakhāya bandhitvā kata,guḷika,kalāpako vuccati* (MA 3:280,17); **kuruvindaka,suttiiyāti kuruvindaka,pāsāna,cuṇṇāni lakhāya bandhitvā kata,guḷika,kalāpako vuccati, tam ubhosu antesu gahetvā sarīram ghamṣanti (VA 1200); cf *kuruvindaka,cuṇṇa*, “vermillion-coloured chunam” (J 3:282).**

¹⁰⁷ For a list of “back-scrubbers,” see Cv 5.1.3 @ V 2:106,11; as “back-scratcher,” see:54. It is unlikely to be a “loofah” (M:ÑB 670 etc).

¹⁰⁸ Ce Ee Ke Se so; Be *yāvatadohipi*.

¹⁰⁹ CPD 2:675 (paraphrased): <http://pali.hum.ku.dk/cpd/search.html>. See also PED: *Yāvetadohi* & DP: *eta(d)*, 2 (n).

3.4 KIKĪ KĀSĪ, RĀJA. Kikī was the mythical king of Kāsī, whose capital is Vārāṇasī or Bārāṇasī (Benares) [§14], during the time of Kassapa Buddha. In Sanskrit, the name is *krkī*, that is, the blue jay, (*Coracias benghalensis*) [1.1.4.1 n]. After Ghaṭṭikāra, Kikī is the chief supporter of Kassapa Buddha [§2.8].

Kassapa Buddha explains in some detail why he has taken Ghaṭṭikāra as his chief supporter, that is, on account of Ghaṭṭikāra’s moral virtue and spiritual attainment—he is a non-returner who works and lives like a monk but is able to support his aged blind parents [§§18-20]. Kikī is impressed and donates a great amount of food to Ghaṭṭikāra, but he rejects them [§§22-23].

The Commentary adds that Kikī will live for 120 years. In the future, when Metteyya is Buddha, he will be the wheel-turner Saṅkha, living up to 180 years, and be Metteyya’s chief supporter. “Now” (*etarahi*), Kikī is the just king Asuka (Asoka?) (AA 2:308). **Mahāvastu** says that he once tried to seduce Padma, vatī, after she has become a nun (Mvst 3:168.18).

3.5 PAṆḌU, MUṬĪKASSA¹¹⁰ [§16]

3.5.1 If we take *paṇḍu* to mean “light yellow” and *puṭaka* as “(small) bag or sack,” then we have “yellow sacks.” Both *muṭaka* and *mūṭika* are unattested (not found in the major dictionaries). If *paṇḍu* refers to rice, then we may have “yellow rice” (prepared with turmeric), which is regarded as auspicious, and prepared on special occasions, such as birthdays, weddings, and house-warming.

3.5.2 The Commentary gives some details, saying that *paṇḍu, muṭaka sāli* is rice sowed in specially prepared paddy fields, where it is sprinkled with fragrant water. During harvest, it is kept under a canopy, then cut and bound into fist-sized sheaves, left hanging in the air under which is spread crushed fragrances. The rice is thus stored in a granary for 3 years, kept over fragrant leaves and barks, before it is used as fragrant red rice (MA 3:283).¹¹¹

3.6 KUMMĀSA (Skt *kulmāśa*)¹¹² [§20.2] is usually translated as “sour gruel; broth,”¹¹³ prepared by the spontaneous fermentation of the juice of fruits or of boiled rice (SED). However, here clearly it cannot be “sour gruel,” since a basket would not be able to hold it. Burlingame renders *kummāsa* as “round cake filled with sour gruel” (DhA:B 1:49).

Masefield simply translates it as “*kummāsa*-cake” (VvA:M 89 + 145). Masefield, quoting N A Jayawickrama (Vv:J 1977), helpfully notes: “PED ‘junktet’ is wrong, as is the explanation found in SED sv *kulmāśa*. It is a preparation made from flour and spices and so on and is called *kōmu* in Sinhalese medieval texts. There is also a South Indian preparation called *kumāsi* which is probably the same thing.” (VvA:M 90 n1). Jayawickrama (Vv:J) is probably right, if we assume those meanings he gave had not changed from the times of the suttas. *Kummāsa* may also be a “dumpling...from barley or wheat” (DPL).

4 Ghaṭṭikāra

4.1 GHAṬṬIKĀRA AS THE SUTTA PROTAGONIST

4.1.1 “Ghaṭṭikāra”¹¹⁴ simply means “pot-maker, potter,” probably a trade name or an apronym (a name that describes an occupation). The common noun *ghaṭṭikāra*, “potter” is rare,¹¹⁵ but the proper name is more common.¹¹⁶ The more common word for “potter” is *kumbha, kāra*, “pot-maker,”¹¹⁷ who is probably less skilled than the *ghaṭṭikāra*, who besides pots, also makes jars, bowls and similar vessels.¹¹⁸

This is understandable, as we know that Ghaṭṭikāra’s pots (and what else he fashioned out of clay) are popular with his clients who exchanged them for the things he needs. Despite not selling his wares, he is

¹¹⁰ Ce Ee so; Be ~*puṭakassa*; Ke Se ~*mudikassa*; Comy ~*muṭakassa*.

¹¹¹ On Indian rice, see SD 8.3 (4.1) n.

¹¹² DhA 1:367; VvA 62, 98; PvA 244.

¹¹³ V 3:15; J 1:228; D 1:76 = M 2:17; Vv 14.6; Dhs 646, 740, 875.

¹¹⁴ Ce Ee so; Be Se *ghaṭṭi, kāro*.

¹¹⁵ DhA 1:380.

¹¹⁶ M 2:45 f; S 1:35, 60; H 1:43; as sutta title, “Ghaṭṭikāra Suttanta,” DhA 3:251.

¹¹⁷ *Kumbha, kāra*: V 3:224, 25; D 1:51, 12; Sn 577; J 3:386, 13*; Ap 444, 9; Miln 331, 8; Vism 376, 18..

¹¹⁸ *Ghaṭṭikāra*. For a description of a potter’s daily work, see Auboyer 1962, 1965:93 f.

wealthy enough to support himself, his aged and blind parents, and also be the chief supporter of Kassapa Buddha [§18].

4.1.2 At the close of the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta and in **the Buddha,vaṃsa**, the Buddha identifies himself as the brahmin student Jotipāla, Ghaṭṭikāra’s close friend [§23; B 25.10]. With this identification, the Ghaṭṭikāra’s role in insisting that Jotipāla meet Kassapa Buddha assumes a central significance in our Buddha’s spiritual life. Ghaṭṭikāra’s efforts to bring Jotipāla to see Kassapa Buddha leads to Jotipāla becoming a monk under Kassapa, who also confirms that Jotipāla will be the future Buddha Gotama. [1.4.3]

However, we see no hint of any such prophecy in the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta, which seems to focus on the spiritual deeds of the potter Ghaṭṭikāra. Jotipāla’s role is almost that of a reluctant debutant in his role of the Bodhisattva. [4]

There is an important purpose in putting Ghaṭṭikāra, rather than Jotipāla, as centre stage. This is a natural adaptation¹¹⁹ of the brahminical Brahmā who is the real spiritual debutant: he will, in due course, become Mahā Brahmā, the supreme God of the brahminical pantheon, and a leading role in the life of the Bodhisattva and, in due course, the Buddha’s teachings. [4.2]

4.2 GHAṬṬIKĀRA AS A SAINT

4.2.1 Ghaṭṭikāra as a non-returner

4.2.1.1 The (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta, its Chinese Madhyama Āgama parallel, and their counterparts in the Mahā, vastu and the Saṅgha, bheda, vastu agree in their description of Ghaṭṭikāra’s **moral conduct**. They all depict him as living a life as a virtual monastic. He does not dig the earth for clay to make pots, but only takes the clay from open ground. He does not sell his pots, but offers them in free exchange for beans and rice.¹²⁰ By abstaining from digging the ground so that he does not harm any beings, and by abstaining from using money, and from buying and selling, Ghaṭṭikāra virtually keeps to monastic rules.¹²¹ [§§18.9-12]

The account of Ghaṭṭikāra living a life of a virtual monastic is not meant to be held up as an “ideal lay follower,” but it is a *natural* lifestyle for him since he is a non-returner. In other words, he is a saint, a member of the noble sangha. Technically, he is no more a “lay follower” (*upāsaka*), but a true individual (*sappurisa*), a noble saint. [1.4.2.1]

4.2.1.2 While the Majjhima account indicates that Ghaṭṭikāra is a **non-returner**, the Madhyama Āgama version and the Saṅghabheda vastu present him only as a streamwinner.¹²² The Majjhima account is supported by **the (Gāthā) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta** (S 1.50), **the (Brahmā) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta** (S 2.24) and two Saṃyukta Āgama texts.¹²³ These four texts report that Ghaṭṭikāra, who has been reborn as a brahma, visits Gotama Buddha and reports to him on the progress made by some monks reborn in the Pure Abodes as non-returners. The two Chinese versions explicitly indicate that Ghaṭṭikāra is reborn as a non-returner in

¹¹⁹ It has been suggested by Oldenberg that Brahmā Sahampati (a 1st-dhyana brahma)—not to be confused with the non-returner Ghaṭṭikāra of Avihā—is prob connected with Brahmā Svayambhū of brahminical literature (V:O 1:86 n1). On natural adaptation, see SD 39.3 (3.3.4).

¹²⁰ M 81/2:51,24, MĀ 63 at T1.502a5 (Basak 1963a:424,2; Senart 1882a:326,19; Gnoli 1978a:26,24 and D (1) ’dul ba, ga 4a4 or Q (1030) nge 3b6); see also T197 (T4.172c16).

¹²¹ This becomes all the more evident in the detailed description of Ghaṭṭikāra’s virtuous conduct in MĀ 63, which notes that he would not accept livestock, slaves, land, and grains, etc, a description similar to the standard description of proper ethical conduct for recluses found in, eg, **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1,10/1:5,12) = **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,-45.3/1:64), SD 8.10.

¹²² **§§18.5-8** shows that Ghaṭṭikāra is free from doubt regarding the 3 jewels and the 4 noble truths, suggesting that he has attained streamwinning, an indication also made in MĀ 63 (T1.501b12), and in Gnoli 1978a: 26,22 as well as in Tib version, D (1) ’dul ba, ga 4a3 or Q (1030) nge 3b5. **§18.13** finally states that Ghaṭṭikāra has destroyed the 5 lower fetters, declaring that he has won non-return.

¹²³ S 1.50/1:35,6 (or S2 50/1:75,3) recurs with prose intro as **(Brahmā) Ghaṭṭikāra S** (S 2.24/1:60,4 or S2 105/-1:137,16). The Chin parallels are SĀ 595 (T2.159c3) and S2 189/2:442c26, which differ in as much as they speak of Nandīpāla, 難提婆 (羅) *nán tí pó* (*luó*).

the Pure Abodes,¹²⁴ which is implicit in the Pali Suttas mentioned, since for him to know what is taking place in the Pure Abodes suggests that he would have been living there himself and thus is a non-returner himself.

4.2.1.3 The Mahāvastu reports that Ghaṭikāra is reborn in the Pure Abodes. It says that, in his life as a Pure Abode brahma, Ghaṭikāra plays an important role in helping his former friend Jyotipāla (Jotipāla), now reborn as the Bodhisattva Gotama, the Buddha-to-be. The Mahāvastu account indicates that the brahma Ghaṭikāra, together with other brahmas of the Pure Abodes, are responsible for conjuring up the sight of an old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a recluse—the 4 sights [2.1.2.2] that move the Bodhisattva’s heart with samvega (spiritual urgency)¹²⁵ so that he decides to renounce the world.¹²⁶

4.3 GHAṬIKĀRA AS A BRAHMA

4.3.1 In the (*Gāthā*) *Ghaṭikāra Sutta* (S 1.50) and the (*Brahmā*) *Ghaṭikāra Sutta* (S 2.24), the brahma Ghaṭikāra visits the Buddha and recalls their ancient friendship, and where the Buddha addresses him as Bhaggava, a generic honorific for all potters, or perhaps *the* archetypal potter in Buddhist hagiology.¹²⁷ Clearly from this, we may say that the trade of a potter is a respectable one—or, at least that Ghaṭikāra is a respectable potter. [1.1.2.3]

4.3.2 In the *Story of the Layman Chatta, pāṇī* (DhA 4.7), Ghaṭikāra is held up as a once-returner, one who takes only one meal a day and lives the holy life. In fact, the story highlights the fact that Chatta, pāṇī, being a once-returner, conducts himself (like taking only one meal a day), just like Ghaṭikāra.¹²⁸

4.3.3 The Commentaries say that it was Brahma Ghaṭikāra who offers the Bodhisattva the 8 requisites of a monk (3 robes, bowl, razor, needle, girdle, water-strainer) during the great renunciation.¹²⁹ These are the only 8 items that are regarded as “possessions” of a monk, but which he uses mindfully, only to facilitate his spiritual and expedite his awakening.

5 Jotipāla

5.1 FIERCE FRIENDSHIP

5.1.1 Jotipāla (“the guardian of light”) [§6.2+23] is one of the Sutta’s two protagonists.¹³⁰ Although at the close of the Sutta, the Buddha identifies himself as Jotipāla in the past, Jotipāla is never stated as being a bodhisattva or taking a vow to become the future buddha. Only in later works, such as **the Jātaka Nidāna**, in its account of Kassapa Buddha, is the brahmin youth Jotipāla called the Bodhisattva (J 1:43).¹³¹

¹²⁴ SĀ 595 (T2.159b22) and SĀ2 189 (T2.442c14).

¹²⁵ On *samvega* (*samvega*), see SD 1.11 (3).

¹²⁶ Basak 1965:212,3, 214,9, 217,6, and 221,3; Senart 1890:150,16, 152,10, 154,7, and 156,18. This intervention by Nandipāla recurs also in a Buddha-biography preserved in Chinese, 修行本起經 *xiū xíng běn qǐ jīng*, T184 (T3.466b18). Another Buddha-biography, 過去現在因果經 *guò qù xiàn zài yīn guǒ jīng* (T189: T3.629c17, T3.630a-17, T3.630c27, and T3.631c13) attributes the manifestation of an old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a recluse to an unnamed deva from the Pure Abodes. According to Buddhacarita (Buc 3.26, 3.40, 3.54; Johnston 1936:23, 25, and 27), the devas from the Pure Abodes were only responsible for the first three manifestations, ie, the old man, the sick man, and the dead man, while according to the Saṅgha, bheda, vastu (Gnoli 1977:73,2), they were only responsible for conjuring the apparition of a recluse, see also T1450 (T24.113b18).

¹²⁷ S 1.50/1:35 f, 2.24/1:60.

¹²⁸ DhA 4.7/1:380; cf AA 1:78.

¹²⁹ DA 1:206 f; J 1:65, 4:342, 5:254; SnA 2:382; DhA 2:61; BA 284; VvA 314.

¹³⁰ Horner misidentifies him as his namesake, the son of Govinda in **Mahā Govinda S** (D 19) (M:H 2:224 n1).

¹³¹ See M 2:54; J 1:43; ApA 47, 114; Mvst 1:336. On Kassapa Buddha’s prophecy of Gotama Buddha, see B 25.-20-32/93 f; on Gotama, see B 26/97 f.

5.1.2 The Saṅghabhedavastu¹³² says that Jyotipāla’s father is Nyagradha,¹³³ a “brahmin of great halls.” The Chinese parallel (MĀ 63) renders this name as “Non-anger,” 無恚 *wú huì*, clearly mistaking of *nyagrodha* for *nis* (non) + *krodha* (anger).

5.1.3 The (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta (M 81) records Jotipāla’s friendship with the potter Ghaṭikāra, on whose encouragement, he meets Kassapa Buddha, and decides to go forth under him [§§6-12]. The intimacy between Ghaṭikāra and Jotipāla is a good example of spiritual friendship between two lay persons, especially one who is steeped in the Dharma, and the other whose mind is willing and ready for learning.

Despite Ghaṭikāra’s apparent violence against Jotipāla, it is not premeditated, but more of a spontaneous, perhaps a desperate act, arising from *samvega*, a sense of spiritual urgency. Such a feeling is so powerful that there is no fear of any negative consequences (as there are none).

5.2 JOTIPĀLA’S REVILING THE BUDDHA

5.2.1 Jotipāla’s initial attitude

5.2.1.1 The (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta records how, when the potter Ghaṭikāra suggests to the brahmin youth Jotipāla that they visit the Buddhist Kassapa, Jotipāla reviles the Buddha each time (seven times altogether), claiming that he has nothing to gain in seeing such a “bald-headed little recluse” [§§6.5+6.6+6.7, 7.4+7.5+7.6, 8.4]. Gotama Buddha, on account of his past karma, has to spend 7 long years in quest of awakening, 6 of which are painful years of self-mortification, a far longer period than do any of the other buddhas.¹³⁴

5.2.1.2 Jotipāla’s reviling of Kassapa Buddha is more of a cultural conditioning or class reflex (a snobbery of the royal and the affluent). Hence, we see him practically parroting his abuse against Kassapa Buddha each time (for 7 times) that Ghaṭikāra suggests that they see the Buddha. His abuses are more of an unmindful act rather than a malicious one. His abuses are made out of impulse rather than unwholesome intent. Even then, such deeds are karmically potent. [5.4]

5.3 JOTIPĀLA AS A MONK UNDER KASSAPA

5.3.1 Neither learner nor non-learner

5.3.1.1 The Kathāvatthu discusses the controversy regarding whether the Bodhisattva was a celibate practitioner (*brahma, cārī*), or that he had found the sure path (*okkanta, niyāma*) (that is, at least attained streamwinning), while living as a monk under Kassapa Buddha.¹³⁵ Essentially, the Kathāvatthu says that the Bodhisattva is neither a learner (*sekha*)—not a streamwinner, nor a once-returner, nor a non-returner—nor an arhat (*asekha*). Yet, he was no ordinary person or worldling, because of his aspiration and determination to become a buddha—in short, he is surely moving towards self-awakening.

5.3.1.2 This does not mean that he learns nothing from the Buddhas and teachers he has met in his different lives leading up to his great awakening. His meetings with the 24 past buddhas were a sort of tutelage (*nissaya*)¹³⁶ or apprenticeship, which, first of all, keeps him on the path to buddhahood, and, secondly, allows him a total “existential exposure” to all that life has to offer.

Traditionally, such efforts are systematically organized into the 10 perfections, and exemplified in the Jātaka stories. Since the Buddha arises like a lotus from the mud that is the world, he is Everyman, or in evolutionary terms, he is the first to fully evolve above the species into a sub species *aeternatis* or a sui generis, a class all his own, a fully self-awakened buddha. Hence, the ancient Buddhist redactors see the various folk talks and popular stories as reflecting, even portending, the coming of the world teacher.

¹³² Saṅgha, bheda, vastu, “the matter of schism in the sangha,” is ch 17 (the last) of the Mūla, sarvāstivasa Vinaya. See Gnoli 1978a:22,3.

¹³³ *Nyagrodho nāma brāhmaṇa, mahāsālāḥ*; P *nigrodha*, “banyan (tree).”

¹³⁴ Ap 387.29/1:301 = UA 265 f; ApA 114 f. On the Bodhisattva’s self-mortification, see **Mahā Sihanāda S** (M 12,44-62/1:77-83), SD 49.1.

¹³⁵ Kvu 4.8/286; cf Miln 221-223.

¹³⁶ “Tutelage” (*nissaya*) is a monastic term for the minimum of 5 years that a duly ordained monk (*bhikkhu*) must observe “in dependence” on a proper preceptor or teacher, or until such time he is deemed spiritually mature enough to be on his own. See SD 40a.8 (4.2.2.3).

5.3.1.3 Academically, this would be like working on a PhD dissertation over 24 lives, so that one becomes the best authority on suffering and the ending of suffering. Indeed, it is as if one lives all his lives fully and truly experiencing whatever they have to offer in terms of both pleasure and of pain. One is fully accomplished in what life has to offer: a sort of specialist in lives and their vicissitudes.

Ideally, he would have gone through all the suffering, existentially possible, so that there is nothing new that he can be told about *our* suffering, and no questions or problems about suffering that he cannot solve or help solve in due time. In short, he is a spiritually self-cultivated (*sayambhū*) (Kvu 1:287) being bound for full self-awakening (*sammā,sambodhi*).

5.3.1.4 Otherwise, there is no record whatsoever of any spiritual attainment of the Bodhisattva as the monk Jotipāla in the time of Kassapa Buddha (or earlier). However, even then, he was clearly a morally upright individual, spiritually cultivating himself, finishing off his past karma, so that the way is open for his full awakening as Gotama Buddha in due course.

5.3.2 The Buddha has no teacher

5.3.2.1 It is a well known fact that the Buddha claims that he has no teacher,¹³⁷ as he famously replies to Upaka's question.¹³⁸ Yet, the Bodhisattva was reborn as a student of each of the 24 buddhas [2.1.1] (as all aspirants to buddhahood do), and even in his last life, he had at least two famous teachers, Ājāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta. [5.1.2]

5.3.2.2 According to the Commentary on **the Ghaṭikāra Sutta**, the Bodhisattva learns all of Kassapa Buddha's teachings and fulfills all the recluse's duties (*samaṇa,dhamma*), including the 13 ascetic practices.¹³⁹ However, he does not make any effort to attain the paths or fruits (which would end his bodhisattva career). Technically, he is said to have cultivated insight wisdom or the stages of purification only up to that of "conformity knowledge" (*anuloma ñāṇa*) (MA 3:282). This is the stage just before the "change of lineage" (*gotra,bhū*) or attaining of streamwinning.¹⁴⁰

5.3.2.3 Since he has not attained even streamwinning, his attainment is still "mundane" (*lokiya*), and still an "outsider" to the path.¹⁴¹ Even as an "outsider," the Bodhisattva is moved by his vision of the Dharma. In other words, he is a good worldling (*kalyāṇa puthujjana*); indeed, he is the foremost of all worldlings, good or bad. He is evolving towards full self-awakening, buddhahood.

5.3.2.4 The two teachers in the Bodhisattva's last life, too, only give him teachings ripening in worldly attainments. However, he discovers the supramundane (*lokuttara*) truth of awakening (*bodhi*) by his own efforts.¹⁴² As such, the Buddha declares that he has no teacher, meaning, historically, that he has no *living* teacher.

5.3.2.5 Then, there is **the spiritual reason** for the Buddha declaring that he has no teacher. This has to do with the very nature of Buddhist training and liberation. No matter how many teachers we may

¹³⁷ Several canonical refs record the Buddha stating that he has no teacher: *na me ācariyo atthi* (M 26/1:171,7 = V 1:8,21); 自覺誰稱師 *zì jué shéi chēng shī* (MĀ 204 (T1.777b17)); 我亦無師保 *wǒ yì wú shī bǎo*, EĀ 24.5 (T2.618c8). A number of Buddha biographies contain the same statement: 無師無等侶 *wú shī wú děng lǚ*, T189 (T3.643c22); 我今無所師 *wǒ jīn wú suǒ shī*, T191 (T3.953b21); 我行無師保 *wǒ xíng wú shī bǎo*, T196 (T4.148a8); and *ācārya na hi me kaścīd* (Lalitavistara, Lefmann 1902:405,20). Other sources incl the different versions of *Udāna(varga)* (on this title, see Bernhard 1968, and discussion in Willeman 1978:xxv f & Dhammajoti 1995:39; *ācārya me na vai kaścīd* (Bernhard 1965:279 (21.4)); [*ācār*]yya ko asti (Nakatani 1987:60 (273), see also Chakravarti 1930:263; with Chin parallels, 我既無師保 *wǒ jì wú shī bǎo*, T212 (T4.717b22) and T213 (T4.787c1); and the Tibetan version, *nga la slob dpon su yang med* (Beckh 1911:69 or Zongtse 1990:209 (21.4). Several Vinayas contain this statement: Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, 我亦無有師 *wǒ yì wú yǒu shī* (T1428 (T22.787c3)); Mahā,vastu, *na me ācārya asti* (Senart 1897:326,11); Mahīśāsaka Vinaya, 我行不由師 *wǒ xíng bù yóu shī* (T1421 (T22.104a26)); Saṅgha,bheda,vastu, *na me'sti kaścīd ācārya* (Gnoli 1977:132,5); with its Chinese parallel, 我今不從師受業 *wǒ jīn bù cóng shī shòu yè* (T1450 @ T24.127a20); and Tibetan parallel, *nga la slob dpon' ga' med do* (Waldschmidt 1957:129,4).

¹³⁸ V 1:8; M 1:171; J 1:81; DhA 4:71 f; cf Miln 235; UA 54; Kvu 289; Mvst 3:326. See SD 12.1 (4.1).

¹³⁹ On the ascetic practices (*dhut'āṅga*), see SD 3.15 (2).

¹⁴⁰ See SD 28.3 (1.3).

¹⁴¹ On "outsider" (*bahiraka*), see **Dakkhiṇa Vibhaṅga S** (M 142,5(11)) & nn, SD 1.9; also SD 47.1 (1.1.2).

¹⁴² See Miln 6.1/235 f.

have—even if we had all the 24 buddhas as our teachers—we must make the effort ourselves to awaken. For, it is *we* who have to awaken from our sleep of ignorance and dreams of craving.

Once we have attained even the level of streamwinning, we are transformed into true “learners” (*sekha*). We are then attentive enough to see the true nature of people and things around us, to truly hear the cries of the world, to rejoice in good, and to remain true to our path to awakening. Once we attain self-awakening as arhats, then, we see the true Dharma itself directly, just as the Buddha sees it.

5.3.2.6 Seeing the Dharma, true reality, we see no teacher, only the teaching. Having attained the clearest of awakening, the arhats are so joyful that they will naturally feel profoundly grateful to those on whose account they have awakened. As recorded in **the Gārava Sutta** (S 6.2), soon after his awakening, the Buddha reflects, “One dwells in suffering if one is without respect, without deference (to others).¹⁴³ Now what ascetic or brahmin can I, honouring, respecting, dwell in dependence on?”

Seeing no one alive who is awakened to be such a refuge, the Buddha reflects that it is the Dharma itself that he should turn to as refuge, to dwell in dependence on. After all, it is the Dharma that awakens the Buddha. Yet, he is at the same time, reminding us that we must look to ourself, look within, to see that Dharma. This is the right direction, and as long as we head that way, we will be able to learn and benefit from everyone, whether they have anything to teach or not, and from everything that we experience along the way. But we must make that journey ourself, make that effort ourself.¹⁴⁴ In this sense, the spiritual path to awakening is the “one going” (*ek’āyana*), the way of the one, the true individual.¹⁴⁵

5.3.3 “Things unheard before”

5.3.3.1 Another interesting point is the statement that the Buddha has awakened to and teaches “things unheard before” (*ananussutesu dhammesu*), as the Buddha declares in **the (Dhamma,cakka Pa-vattana Sutta** (S 56.11)¹⁴⁶ and in a number of other suttas and their parallels.¹⁴⁷ Now, if our Buddha has the power of recollecting past lives, he would be able to know his past birth as Jotipāla, for example (as reported in the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta). It is then problematic for the Buddha to declare that his awakening is an insight into “things unheard before.”

5.3.3.2 If Gotama Buddha had heard the Dharma from Kassapa Buddha in a previous life, then, strictly speaking, the Dharma that he discovers or re-discovers with his great awakening cannot be said to be something “unheard before.” However, having heard the Dharma from Kassapa Buddha, Gotama thus becomes a part of the lineage of those who have “heard” (*suta*) the Dharma.

In the eye of the ancient Indians, especially of the religious, educated, ruling elites, and the pious populace, such a person is held in high esteem since he is the successor of lineage of teachers. However, unlike the other well known teachers of his time, the Buddha does not only declare any such lineage of “the heard” (*anussavana*), and he unequivocally rejects this as an authentic source of knowledge, such as detailed in **the Kesa,puttiya Sutta** (A 3.65).¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ *Dukkham kho agāravo viharati appaṭisso* (S 1:139 = A 2:20; qu at MA 2:136; also V 2:89 = D 3:244 = M 2:-245 = Vbh 381).

¹⁴⁴ S 6.2/1:138-140 (SD 12.3).

¹⁴⁵ On *ek’āyana*, see M 10,2 & SD 13.4 (3.2).

¹⁴⁶ S 56.11,9-12/5:422 f; V 1:10-12 (SD 1.1).

¹⁴⁷ That the Dharma as something “unheard before” is stated in similar ways in a range of discourses and Buddha-biographies: S 56.11/5:422,3 = V 1:11,1: *pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu*; Catuspariṣat Sūtra frag 484e R2: *pūrvam-ananuśruteṣu dharmeṣu* (Waldschmidt 1952:52); SĀ 379 (T2.103c15: 本所未曾聞法 *běn suǒ wèi céng wén fǎ*; EĀ 24.5 (T2.619a21): 本未聞法 *běn wèi wén fǎ*; T109 (T2.503b19): 本未聞道 *běn wèi wén dào* (adopting 未 *wèi* instead of 末 *mò*); T212 (T4.685c27): 本所未聞 *běn suǒ wèi wén*; D (337) *mdo sde, sa 275a7* or Q (1003) *shu 283b2: sngon ma thos pa’ i chos*; Lalitavistara: *pūrvam,āsruteṣu dharmeṣu* (Lefman 1902: 417,15). The expression recurs in several Vinayas: Dharmaguptaka Vinaya (T1428 (T22.788a30): 本未聞法 *běn wèi wén fǎ*; Mahāvastu: *pūrve ananuśrutehi dharmehi* (Senart 1897: 332,13); Mahī śāsaka Vinaya: 是法我先未聞 *shì fǎ wǒ xiān wèi wén*, T1421 (T22.104c7); Saṅgha,bheda,vastu: *pūrvam ananuśruteṣu dharmeṣ* (Gnoli 1977: 135,2 with its Chin parallel, T1450 (T24.127c8): 我未曾聞 *wǒ wèi céng wén*, and Tib counterpart, *sngon ma thos pa’ i chos* (Waldschmidt 1957:149,1); and Sarvāstivāda Vinaya: 我先不從他聞法 *wǒ xiān bù cóng tā wén fǎ*, T1435 (T22.448b19); see also Chung 2006.

¹⁴⁸ A 3.65,3.1 (SD 35.4a): see Comy §3.1 (1).

After all, there is no way of knowing whether such a lineage existed at all. The line could well have been broken at some time in the past, but their upholders simply kept a hagiological lineage of fictitious predecessors. All we need is a single breach along the line, and the lineage would not have been authentic, as far as lineages go.

5.3.3.3 It is well known, for example, that the Chan and Zen lineages, especially in their earlier stages are contrived, often fictitious, or simply unreliable—it is used merely to authenticate their sect as an institution, and to confer “Dharma transmission” and “enlightenment” upon a successor—like an imperial title or status bestowed by the emperor—instead of inspiring a true transformation of the individual through the Dharma.¹⁴⁹

Moreover, as the Buddha states in **the Sandaka Sutta** (M 76), the teaching that is transmitted in such a tradition or lineage, could indeed be flawed, that is, it could either be well-remembered or ill-remembered, and either true or false.¹⁵⁰ Understandably, such religious sects or groups need to authenticate themselves in non-spiritual ways, such as through rituals and formalism, that is, external display of charisma through impressive modes of dress, complicated rituals, and some kind of hierarchy and title system—such as those of Zen Buddhism or the Roman Catholic Church.

5.3.3.4 The Buddha unequivocally rejects any kind of religious legitimation through lineage because it is a contrived tradition that is rooted in ritualism and formalism, like Brahmanism [5.3.3.3]. Broadly, “legitimation” here means that we are pretending to openly present ourselves as having some spiritual attainment when that is not the case at all. However, the Buddha does not reject the fact that his awakening is the same as that of the other Buddhas. All buddhas realize the same Dharma.

In fact, according to **the Nagara Sutta** (S 12.65) and its parallels, the Buddha considers his awakening to be a rediscovery of an “ancient path,” taken by awakened ones of the past.¹⁵¹ This puts his assertion of having realized what was “unheard before” in perspective. He does not claim to have discovered something entirely new. Rather, he considers his own realization to be a rediscovery of a lost truth, of which this generation has never heard. It cannot have been “lost” since we have *heard* it, meaning that we have listened attentively to it and properly practised it.¹⁵² Since it is lost in our times, it needs to be rediscovered and proclaimed again.

5.3.3.5 From all this, it is clear that the Buddha’s claim to have realized the “unheard before” is to highlight that he has awakened independently of any instructions from a teacher—that is, he has not “heard” it from any ancient Indian oral tradition, as a transmission from a guru to chela. It is self-discovery of the path that makes him a fully self-awakened buddha.¹⁵³

Even if we do not accept these points in themselves as being conclusive, the sutta passages mentioned (or any sutta passage) speak for themselves. None of them in any way at all suggests that the Buddha’s awakening was simply a matter of his having recalled teachings from the past buddha Kassapa or any other past buddha.

¹⁴⁹ See **How Buddhism Became Chinese**, SD 40b.5 (5.1.2.9).

¹⁵⁰ M 76,21-23 + SD 35.7 (3.1.1). See also SD 35.4a (4).

¹⁵¹ S 12.65/2:106,15: “I saw an ancient path,” (*addasaṃ purāṇaṃ maggaṃ* (Se: *purāṇa, maggaṃ*); SĀ 287 (T2.-80c27): 得古仙人道 *dé gǔ xiān rén dào*, “I attained an ancient path of seers,” EĀ 38.4 (T2.718c6): 見古昔諸佛所遊行處 *jiàn gǔ xī zhū fó suǒ yóu xíng chù*, “I saw an ancient path, where former Buddhas had passed by”; T713 (T16.-827b7): 得故道所 *dé gù dào suǒ*, “I attained an ancient path”; T714 (T16.828b21): 我今證得舊道 *wǒ jīn zhèng dé jiù dào*, “I now realized an old path”; T715 (T16.830a24): 我亦如是履, 於諸佛舊所行道 *wǒ yì rú shì lǚ, yú zhū fó jiù suǒ xíng dào*, “I walked a path like the one used by past Buddhas”; and a Skt fragment *adhigato me paurāṇo mārgaḥ*, “I attained an ancient path” (Bongard-Levin 1996:80 (I.32)). See also Lévi 1910:440 and Tripāṭhī 1962:103.

¹⁵² S 12.65/2:104-107 (SD 14.2); Skt SD 14.4.

¹⁵³ S 22.58/3:66,15, SĀ 75 (T2.19c3), and SĀ 684 (T2.186c6) highlight the discovery of the path as the decisive difference between a Tathāgata and an arhat. See also (**Deva**) **Saṅgāra S** (M 100/2:211,16), SD 10.9, where the Buddha claims to have awakened after having directly known the Dharma which is unheard before (*pubbe ananusutesu dhammesu sāmāṇe yeva dhammaṃ abhiññāya*), with a closely parallel Skt frag 348r1-2: *pūrvam ananusruteṣu dharmeṣu [svayam dha]rmmā[n abhijñāya]* (Zhang 2004:12); see also SHT IV 165 folio 26Vc (Sander & Waldschmidt 1980:200). The emphasis in this formulation is on self-realization, without relying on others’ teachings.

These sutta passages would read more naturally if we were to assume that at the time when they were composed, no one, other than the sutta compilers, had any idea at all that Gotama Buddha had been a monk-disciple of the past Buddha Kassapa. Having said that, we must then conclude that the identification of Gotama Buddha with the brahmin youth Jotipāla, who went forth under Kassapa Buddha, very likely occurred only at a later time. [5.4.3]

5.3.3.6 It is useful here to distinguish between “listening” and “hearing” (*sotaṃ odahati*)¹⁵⁴ and to “hear” (*suta*).¹⁵⁵ While listening is at best a directing of our attention to the source of knowledge and wisdom, it is the hearing that actually makes us wise and frees us from our views, or at least, the old wrong views. As such, there are many who *listen* to the Dharma (as Jotipāla has done before Kassapa Buddha), but few who actually *hear* the liberating truth in that Dharma.

Perhaps, by “unheard before,” the Buddha is referring to the unawakened, or even to himself, when he was still a Bodhisattva before the past buddhas. He listened to all the past buddhas whom he has met. However, only when he himself meditated and truly “heard” the Dharma for himself: everything began to make sense, and so he awakens to buddhahood by his own effort. In this sense, he has not really “heard” the liberating Dharma before. Now, as the Buddha, he fully understands it all. Now, we need to hear the Dharma for ourself by our “inner listening.”

5.4 JOTIPĀLA, GOTAMA AND THE BODHISATTVA IDEAL

5.4.1 Jotipāla and Ghaṭikāra

5.4.1.1 Jotipāla, we are told, is Gotama Buddha in the time of Kassapa Buddha [§25]. When Jotipāla dies, he is reborn as Santusita, lord of Tusita (where all Bodhisattvas are reborn in their penultimate lives) [1.1.7.2]. In other words, in the temporal framework, Jotipāla lived only two lives away from our Buddha, the fully self-awakened one, the apex of his spiritual progress and our own human evolution.

According to the Buddhavaṃsa, 100,000 aeons and 4 incalculables ago,¹⁵⁶ our Buddha was the hermit Sumedha, who first aspired to become a future buddha himself, So he placed himself down prostrate in the mud so that Dīpaṅkara Buddha and his monks could safely walk on him over the mud.¹⁵⁷ Such an action portrays the person’s willingness and ability to rise above himself, in preparation for self-awakening.¹⁵⁸

5.4.1.2 The question now arises: after being a candidate for buddhahood who had been learning and preparing himself for the final renunciation before 24 past buddhas [2.1.1], why would Jotipāla show such hostility towards Kassapa Buddha? When Ghaṭikāra proposes that they visit the Buddha, Jotipāla not only refuses a total of seven times, but also reviles the Buddha as a “bald-headed little recluse” [5.2.1].

This derogatory expression is common amongst brahmins of the Buddha’s times, showing their contempt and consternation over Buddhist monks. And Jotipāla is not only the son of a very wealthy brahmin, but also a “brahmin youth” (*maṇava*) himself. He is himself a sort of young prodigy, who is said to teach many (traditionally said to be 500) young brahmins.

¹⁵⁴ On *sotaṃ odahati* and its context, see eg **Kīṭā, giri S** (M 70,23(4)/1:480,4), SD 11.1; **Caṅkī S** (M 95,20.4/-2:173,19), SD 21.15.

¹⁵⁵ *Suta* has the simple sense of “wise,” in terms of learning (esp *suta, mayā paññā*, “heard wisdom,” D 33,1.10-(43)/3:219; Vbh 324; DA 3:1002; PmA 1:130 (qu Vbh 324); CA 316; VbhA 412); or “deeply wise” (*babu-s, suta*), in terms of having truly tasted the Dharma, even awakening. Sometimes, the two words are used interchangeably eg (**Abhabba**) **Ānanda S** (A 10.82,3/5:153,29); SD 34.1 (3.3.5.5).

¹⁵⁶ An “aeon” (*kappa*; Skt *kalpa*) is a world-cycle; an “incalculable” (*asaṅkheyya*; Skt *asamkhyeyya*) is most commonly given a 10⁵¹, 10⁵⁹ or 10⁶³ years.

¹⁵⁷ B 2.51/12,14. The precedent for such an act can be found in **Bhadāli S** (M 65/1:439,26) and its Chin parallel MĀ 194 (T1.747a28).

¹⁵⁸ Such selfless actions are never viewed as rituals, not even actions to be emulated. They are very personal and spontaneous responses of self-sacrifice with a vision of spirituality. To gain self-awakening, we also need (even more so) to let go of selfishness within, ie, work to remove the very roots of greed, hate and delusion.

In fact, **the Chinese parallel** (MĀ 63) records the potter Nandīpāla (Ghaṭikāra) inviting the brahmin youth Uttara (Jotipāla) only once—unlike in the (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta [5.2.1].¹⁵⁹ This is at dawn, when Nandīpāla has just returned from visiting the Buddha Kassapa, and he meets Uttara in his chariot drawn by a white horse, accompanied by 500 other brahmin youths, leaving Vebhalinga for the forest, where Uttara is going to recite Vedic hymns.¹⁶⁰ Thus, it is understandable that Uttara would turn down Nandīpāla’s invitation.

5.4.1.3 The brahmin youth Uttara (Jotipāla), however, also derides the Buddha, saying, “I do not want to see a bald-headed recluse!”¹⁶¹ A bald-headed recluse will not be able to attain awakening because it is difficult to awaken.”¹⁶² Clearly, it is this remark that prompts the potter Nandīpāla to seize Uttara’s topknot, forcing him to come down from the chariot. This is surely a violent act, especially before 500 other young brahmins (but there is no record of any of their reactions).

Here, however, we are not told of the potter’s mental state, *the mind* behind the act. (The (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta states that the potter is a non-returner, but there is no such mention in MĀ 63.) It is likely that **MĀ 63** depicts the potter as a streamwinner—because it is said, “He had attained faith, was keeping the precepts, had heard much, was generous and was accomplished in wisdom.”¹⁶³

5.4.1.4 This actually makes good sense, since as a **streamwinner**, the potter’s moral courage moved him to resort to an act of faith. After all, he is a low caste man, while his friend is a brahmin. It is also a wholesome act because he “always has thoughts of affection towards the young brahmin Uttara.”¹⁶⁴ **The (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta**, however, presents Ghaṭikāra as a non-returner, who, as such, would not have “thoughts of affection,” although he would be favourably disposed to Jotipāla.

As a non-returner, Ghaṭikāra would be more aware of Jotipāla’s spiritual potential (though we cannot for sure say that he knows or foresees Jotipāla’s destiny as the next buddha). The point, however, remains that in both cases, the potter’s courageous action helps to ripen the brahmin youth’s good karma, so that he is well disposed to see the Buddha.

Thus, Uttara thinks, “This potter Nandipala never makes jokes and he is neither mad nor foolish. There must certainly be a reason why he now seizes my topknot.”¹⁶⁵ This response, except for the words, is identical to Jotipāla’s response, “Wonderful indeed, sir! Marvellous indeed, sir! That this potter Ghaṭi-

¹⁵⁹ Mahā,vastu and Chin Avadāna accounts, however, report only a single invitation *after* the two have taken a bath (Senart 1882:320,19) and T197 (T4.172c27). Saṅgha,bheda,vastu (Gnoli 1978a:23,23) and D 1 ga 5a7 or Q 1030 nge 4b8, only report the first instance with three invitations, without following up with the bathing episode.

¹⁶⁰ MĀ 63 (T I 500a15): 令讀梵志書 *lìng dú fān zhì shū*, lit “in order to read aloud brahmin texts [books],” where the counterpart in the Saṅgha,bheda,vastu (Gnoli 1978a:23,13) reads: *brāhmaṇakān mantrān vācayitukāmah*, clarifying that oral recitation of hymns and mantras is meant. For refs to “books” to be similarly interpreted, see Gombrich 1990a:27.

¹⁶¹ MĀ 63 (T1.500a210): 我不欲見禿頭沙門 *wǒ bù yù jiàn tū tóu shā mén*. The parallel versions report similar derogatory remarks by the brahmin youth here [4.2.1]; see also Mahāvastu (Mvst 1:320; Senart 1882: 320,3); Saṅghebheda-vastu (Gnoli 1978a: 23,19) and D 1 ga 5a4 or Q 1030 nge 4b5; and Chinese *Avadāna*, T197 (T4.172c-23).

¹⁶² MĀ 63 (T1.500a22): 道難得故 *dé nán dé gù*, where, from the parallel Saṅgha,bheda,vastu (Gnoli 1978a: 23,20): *bodhir hi parama,duṣkarā*, and D 1 ga 5a4 or Q 1030: nge 4b5: *byang chub ni mchog tu dka’ ba yin no*, the idea was that awakening could only be gained through asceticism.

¹⁶³ §6.1 (which introduces Ghaṭikāra) does not describe the potter’s accomplishment or his moral virtues, which is only given at §18, as part of Kassapa’s explanation to king of Kāsī. In the parallel section in MA 63 (T1.501b11), Kassapa Buddha repeats word for word the account of the potter’s accomplishment and virtues given in the present section.

¹⁶⁴ 阿難！優多羅童子有善朋友，名難提波羅陶師，常為優多羅童子之所愛念，喜見無厭。(Ā nán! Yōu duō luó tóngzǐ yǒu shàn péngyou, míng Nántībōluó táo shī, cháng wéi Yōuduōluó tóngzǐ zhī suǒ ài niàn, xǐ jiàn wú yàn.) MĀ 63 (T1.26.499b02-04). For Analayo’s tr: 2012:158.

¹⁶⁵ MĀ 63 (T1.26.500a22). According to §9, Jotipāla is surprised that the potter, who, though of inferior birth, should go so far as to seize a brahmin’s freshly washed hair. Mahā,vastu (Mvst 1:321; Senart 1882:321,11), also reports the brahmin youth as reflecting on the potter’s low birth, a point not made in Saṅgha,bheda,vastu or Chin Avadāna. On the implications of seizing someone’s hair in ancient India, see Hara 1986a.

kāra, who is of lowly birth, should think of seizing me, my head just lustrated, by the hair! Surely, I think that this is no small matter!” [§9.2]. Taking both responses, coming from the same person, gives us a good idea that Jotipāla is better disposed to meet Kassapa on account of Ghaṭikāra’s efforts.

5.4.2 Jotipāla and king Kikī

5.4.2.1 The (Majjhima) Ghaṭikāra Sutta contains two important narratives:

- (1) that of Ghaṭikāra and Jotipāla [§§5-12];
- (2) that of Ghaṭikāra and king Kikī [§§13-24].

Both narratives are unified by time-frame: they occur in connection with Kassapa Buddha, who is, in fact, at the same still centre (as it were) of both these dramatic narratives.

5.4.2.2 The first narrative—that of **Ghaṭikāra and Jotipāla** [§§5-12]—is a courageous story of spiritual friendship that crosses class levels. Jotipāla becomes a monk under Kassapa because of Ghaṭikāra’s initiative, in getting him to meet the Buddha. While Jotipāla becomes a monk, Ghaṭikāra remains a lay disciple. Hence, in this first narrative, Jotipāla takes centre stage as someone who gains the highest spiritual training due to the moral courage of a living friend. It is a story of spiritual friendship and courage.

Hagiology is not history, and yet we learn better things from hagiology than from history. If history is a record of human violence and civilization, then hagiology is a vision of our spirituality and potential for spiritual awakening. The story of Ghaṭikāra and Jotipāla may not be history (even if it is sacred history or hagiology)—it is a parable of courageous friendship and spiritual growth.

5.4.2.3 The second narrative—that of **Ghaṭikāra and king Kikī** [§§13-24]—is a parable of the two kinds of wealth—the worldly and the spiritual. The wealthy king Kikī of Kāsī invites Kassapa Buddha to spend the rains retreat at Benares under his sponsorship, but the Buddha turns him down because he has already accepted Ghaṭikāra’s invitation [§17.4]. Kikī is deeply saddened [§17.5] for two reasons: that the Buddha rejects his invitation to spend the rains at Benares, and that there is someone who is a “better supporter” than he is [§§18.1-4].

Kikī views “better” in terms of “wealth” (although he does not express it). The Buddha then lists **Ghaṭikāra’s “progressive goodness”**: he has gone for refuge [§18.5] and he keeps to the 5 precepts [§18.6]—this qualifies as a good lay follower (*upāsaka*). He has the 4 qualities of a streamwinner [§18.7; 3.2.1.2]. But he also has overcome doubt about the 4 noble truths—he clearly understands them, although he has not fully penetrated them as an arhat [§18.8].

Although not an arhat, Ghaṭikāra takes only one meal a day, observes celibacy [§18.9]; he does not use wealth or money (does not engage in commerce) [§18.10] and does not even dig the ground (not to harm any living beings) [§18.11]—just like a true monk.

Then, there is a surprise: by merely exchanging his pots and wares for “a portion of rice or a portion of bean or a portion of chick peas” [§18.12], he is able to support his blind old parents [§§18.13]. Even while living as a virtual monk, he is able to fulfill his filial duties. And, to top it all: he is a non-returner [§18.14]. In other words, he is only one step, as it were, away from full awakening—just as his beloved companion Jotipāla has only one life before full awakening.

The Buddha then demonstrates Ghaṭikāra’s deep faith and total trust in the Buddha and his monks. On two occasions, the Buddha takes his meals at Ghaṭikāra’s table, even when he is absent [§§19-20], and when the roof of the Buddha’s cell leaks, the monks take the thatch from Ghaṭikāra’s own workshop roof for the Buddha’s use [§21].

5.4.2.4 King Kikī is so impressed that his distress turns into gladness (*muditā*), which he expresses by offering 500 cartloads of “husked rice, and sacks of [red?] yellow rice, and appropriate curry ingredients” [§22]. Understandably, Ghaṭikāra turns down these extravagant gifts [§23]. This remarkable rejection of a rich gift completes the parable of spiritual wealth, which Ghaṭikāra has and is able to use to support the Buddha and his monastic community.

In fact, if the Sutta had ended here, it would have been a grand finale to a great parable. We would have no hagiological problem—no difficulty in the natural connection of the stories of Jotipāla and the Buddha. But the Sutta’s conclusion is yet to come. The Buddha goes on to declare that “I was that brahmin youth Jotipāla” [§25]. And here lies the rub [5.4.1.2].

5.4.3 Influence of the Bodhisattva ideal

5.4.3.1 The Buddha identifying himself as the brahmin youth Jotipāla turns the Jotipāla parable into **the Jotipāla Jātaka**—the past-life story of Jotipāla. And this jātaka now becomes part of a broader Bodhisattva story of our Buddha Gotama. Technically or traditionally, such a story would be included in the Jātaka collection of past-life stories (most of which, however, are commentarial).

The Jotipāla jātaka, however, did not find its way into the Jātaka collection. The reason for this is clear: it began as the Jotipāla parable, and evolved into its present jātaka form after the canonical period, that is, after the Jātaka collection and its stories have been closed, probably around Asoka’s time, that is, around 300 BCE.

5.4.3.2 However, the Jotipāla sutta narrative itself has two anomalies: first, Jotipāla does not aspire to be a future buddha, nor does Kassapa Buddha declare him to be so; secondly, the Jotipāla story here does not have any parallel in the Jātaka collection—unlike the stories of Maha Sudassana (D 17 & J 95) and of Makhadeva (M 83 & J 9) [1.4.2.1]. It is not found in the Jātaka collection, as we have noted [5.4.3.1].

5.4.3.3 It should also be noted that M 81 is called **(Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta** and not “Jotipāla Sutta.” This suggests the protagonist is Ghaṭṭikāra, not Jotipāla. After all, we see Ghaṭṭikāra as the character (other than Kassapa Buddha) who forms the common thread running right through the narrative of the Sutta. In the first narrative of the Sutta [5.4.2.2], we see Ghaṭṭikāra as the agent for the transformation of the unbelieving Jotipāla from a brahmin youth to a renunciant under Kassapa.

In the second narrative [5.4.2.3], we again see Ghaṭṭikāra taking centre stage, this time as the subject of Kassapa’s instruction to king Kikī. Since Ghaṭṭikāra is the subject of both narratives, which forms the bulk of the Sutta, it is only fitting that it is named after him, as the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta.

5.4.3.4 There is another interesting clue to the fact that the Jotipāla story did not begin as a jātaka, but was beginning to be regarded so, perhaps by Asoka’s time, when **the Kathāvatthu** was compiled by Moggallīputta Tissa (c 250 BCE). It alludes to the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta with this quote attributed to the Buddha himself, “Ānanda, under the Blessed One, I lived the holy life for self-awakening in the future.”¹⁶⁶ No such quote is found in the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta.

A possible explanation for this is that an attempt was made to include that line in the (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta available to the community known to Moggallīputta Tissa. However, the innovation was not accepted by the Majjhima reciters of the canonical version that went down to Sri Lanka, from which we have our Majjhima Nikāya today.

5.4.3.5 Furthermore, we do not hear anything more about Jotipāla after he becomes a monk [5.4.2.1]. The Sutta continues (and closes) with the story of Ghaṭṭikāra as the ideal noble disciple [§§13-24]. We only hear about Jotipāla again at the end of the Sutta when the Buddha identifies Jotipāla as himself in the past [§25].

In spite of the brahmin youth being identified as Gotama in a former life, the Sutta and its parallels do not present his deeds and activities as something in any way related to his impending buddhahood. In the jātakas relating to the Bodhisattva, he is often identified as a great king or sage, implying that these births are episodes in the evolution of the Bodhisattva.¹⁶⁷

5.4.3.6 Clearly both the stories of Jotipāla and of Ghaṭṭikāra are simply to teach moral courage, spiritual friendship, true discipleship and spiritual wealth. The (Majjhima) Ghaṭṭikāra Sutta, then, “testifies to the influence of the evolving bodhisattva conception” (Analayo 2012:174), so that the story of Ghaṭṭikāra’s companion was attributed to the life of the Bodhisattva.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ *Kassape ahaṃ ānanda bhagavati brahmacariyaṃ acarim āyatim sambodhaya* (Kvu 288,34): it is untraced. A similar remark, but made by Mahā Maudgalyāyana if found in Saṅgha, bheda, vastu, according to which the Bodhisattva lives the holy life under Kāśyapa Buddha, aspiring to awaken in the future: *Kāśyapo nāma ... buddho bhagavān, yasya antike bodhisattvo bhagavān āyatyaṃ bodhāya pranidhāya brahmacariyaṃ caritvā* (Gnoli 1977: 20,17)

¹⁶⁷ See Gokuldas 1951:10. On the tendency of parables to become jātakas, see Analayo 2012.

¹⁶⁸ In the Chin parallel to **Acchariya-b, bhuta, dhamma S** (M 123), SD 52.2, called 未曾有法經 *wèi céng yǒu fǎ jīng*, records an innovative development in the Bodhisattva ideal, ie, it reports a vow taken by the Bodhisattva Gautama to be a buddha in the future as the first of a list of his miraculous qualities: “The Blessed One, at the time of

All this in no way diminishes the authenticity or efficacy of the Sutta. Like any other major religion, the evolution of Buddhist hagiology is punctuated by inspiring stories of heroic acts of goodness and spiritual transformations. These stories continued to grow after the Buddha's times in far-flung communities of Buddhists.

5.4.3.7 When the texts and traditions of such distinct communities that grew over the centuries became available to other communities, efforts were made to adopt and adapt various aspects of such texts and traditions into the living Buddhist hagiology. All these form a vast and deep pool of teaching aids and ideologies to attract and inspire followers to make what popular Buddhism is today.

However, if we see ourselves as practitioners aspiring to gain awakening in this life itself, or to simply give the Dharma itself its right place above any text or tradition, our practice of mindfulness and meditation should in no way be affected by such interesting differences and strange developments, which belong to the realms of academic study and pious beliefs. Ultimately, our Dharma practice and understanding will give life to the text so that it reflects a living experience of the Dharma leading to our self-awakening.

5.4.3.8 This approach to the analysis of the problem of the Jotipāla narrative follows the principle of what we might call **the “canonical primacy”** rule or “sutta first” rule. The basic idea behind this principle is simply as follows: (1) read the sutta or sutta passage just as it is (with its best variant readings or reconstruction); (2) examine all available parallels, cross-references and allusions for a better understanding of this primary text; and (3) this should be done, as far as possible, to reflect the historical developments of Buddhist teachings and traditions.

6 Gotama Buddha's past karma

6.1 THE BODHISATTVA'S QUEST YEARS

6.1.1 The self-mortification years. The **Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16) records the Buddha as declaring to Subhadda, the last monk to be ordained before him, that he renounced the world at 29, “seeking for the good.”¹⁶⁹ This is the date mentioned in most of the Buddha's biographies (mostly post-canonical), which also adds that he practised austerities for 6 years. The suttas that recount the Bodhisattva's quest do not mention any duration.¹⁷⁰

As Bronkhorst, too, has noted, “[t]he Pali Canon does not, to my knowledge, indicate anywhere how long the future Buddha tried alternative methods. In the later literature [Buddha, carita, Lalita, vistara, Mahā, vastu, J 1:67], however, it is often said that it lasted six years.” (Bronkhorst 1993:14 & n18).¹⁷¹

6.1.2 The 7-year quest. However, we have at least two suttas that mention the Buddha's quest for awakening as lasting “7 years” (*satta vassa*). First, this period is clearly evident from the title, **the Satta Vassa Sutta** (S 4.24), where it is reported, “Now at that time, Māra the bad one, had been pursuing the Blessed One for 7 years, closely watching for any weakness, but found none.”¹⁷² The same is also mentioned in verse in **the Padhāna Sutta** (Sn 3.2), thus,

*Satta vassāni bhagavantam
anubandhim padā padam*

For seven years, I pursued the Blessed One,
following him step for step.

(Sn 448), SD 51.5

Kāśyapa Buddha, made his initial vow to buddhahood, and to practise the holy life,” 世尊迦葉佛時，始願佛道，行梵行 *shìzūn jiāyèfó shí, shì yuàn fó dào, xíng fān xíng*, MĀ 32 (T1.469c24): see Analayo 2010m:85 n90.

¹⁶⁹ D 16.5.27.3 (SD 9).

¹⁷⁰ See **Bhaya, bherava S** (M 4,20/1:20 f), SD 44.3, **Mahā Siha, nāda S** (M 12,44-61/1:77-82), SD 49.1, **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 36,20-30/1:242-246), SD 49.3; also J 1:67 f. Most Chin parallels and texts also mention the same dates: T3.511b, T3.581c, T3.368b, T3.769b, T4.24b, T4.75a. See Nakamura 2000:444 n216, where he however misquoted (**Puñña**) **Mettā S** (A 7.58a), SD 2.11a.

¹⁷¹ See also SD 49.4 (5.1).

¹⁷² S 4.24/1:122-124 (SD 36.5).

There is no contradiction here at all. The 7 years include the first year spent with the two teachers—Āḷāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta¹⁷³—and the remaining 6 years in self-mortification. Moreover, Jotipāla actually reviles Kassapa Buddha seven times, which would fit with the 7 years of quest quite perfectly, as far as coincidences or karmic consequences go. [§§6.5+6.6+6.7+6.8+7.4+7.6+8.4].

6.2 THE 12 PAST BAD DEEDS

6.2.1 Jotipāla’s reviling of Kassapa Buddha is included as the 12th and last of the past bad karma of Gotama Buddha, as recorded in **the Pubba,kamma,piloti** (Ap 387), “the Strands (or Rags) of Previous Karma” (the Piloti, for short), included in the Thera Apadāna (“past lives of the elders”) of the Khuddaka Nikāya.¹⁷⁴ In this late work, an attempt is made to put together accounts of the “past bad karma” of the Bodhisattva. [6.2.4]

6.2.2 The Bodhisattva’s 12 past bad deeds, listed in the Apadāna as the following lives and deeds:

- (1) The scoundrel Munāli who slandered a pratyeka-buddha Surabhi. Past result (*tena kamma, vipākena*): he was reborn in hell for a long time, experiencing thousands of years of pain. Present karmic remnants (*tena kammāvasena*): the female wanderer **Sundarī** slanders against him.¹⁷⁵
- (2) He slandered Nanda, a disciple of Sabbābhībhū Buddha. Past result: Ten thousand years in hell, and after that as a human, where he continued to be plagued by slanders. Present remnants: The female wanderer **Ciñcā Mānavikā** slanders against him.¹⁷⁶
- (3) A learned brahmin, teaching mantras to 500 youths in a great forest: He falsely accused a sage Isigaṇa of unchastity, and his pupils, hearing the slander, repeat it in the village as they went on their almsround. Result: They all suffered slander when **Sundarī** is murdered.¹⁷⁷
- (4) Greedy for wealth, the Bodhisattva murdered his own half-brother by crushing him with a rock. Result: His cousin, Devadatta, threw a boulder at him and **a splinter wounds his foot**.¹⁷⁸
- (5) As a boy playing on the road, he threw a shard of stone at a passing pratyeka-buddha. Result: Devadatta employed thugs to kill him.¹⁷⁹
- (6) Mounted on an elephant, he attacked a pratyeka-buddha going for alms. Result: **Nālāgiri** rushed at him in Rājagaha.¹⁸⁰
- (7) As the unrighteous king Pathiva, he killed a man with a knife. Past result: Suffered “roasting” in hell. Present karmic remnants: After the splint from Devadatta’s boulder hurt **his foot**, it became infected.¹⁸¹
- (8) As the son of a fisherman, he rejoiced in seeing the fishermen bring in dead fish. Result: Headaches,¹⁸² and his clansmen, the Sākyas were massacred by Viḍudabha.¹⁸³
- (9) He cursed the disciples of Phussa Buddha, saying: “No rice for you—chew and eat bad grain.” Result: At Verañjā, the Buddha had to live on coarse grain.¹⁸⁴
- (10) As the son of a wrestler, he interrupted a wrestling match (and according to the Commentary, broke the back of one of the wrestlers in the process). Result: Backaches.¹⁸⁵

¹⁷³ On these 2 teachers, see **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 26,16) + SD 1.11 (4).

¹⁷⁴ Ap 387/299-301.

¹⁷⁵ On Sundarī: U 4.8/43-45; J 2:415-417.

¹⁷⁶ On Ciñcā: J 4:187 f; ApA 118 f; DhA 3:178 ff.; ItA 1:69, 86.

¹⁷⁷ See n above on Sundarī.

¹⁷⁸ A most complete account of Devadatta’s attempts on the Buddha’s life is found in the 7th *khandhaka* (chapter), on “Schism” (Cv 7 @ V 2:180-206). See also **Devadatta**, SD 71.4.

¹⁷⁹ Devadatta sends 31 archers to kill the Buddha: V 2:181 f.

¹⁸⁰ On Nālāgiri, see Intro to **Culla Haṃsa J** (J 533/5:333).

¹⁸¹ On the Buddha’s bleeding toe, see **Sakalikā S 1** (S 1.38/1:27), SD 61.4; **Sakalikā S 2** (S 4.13/1:110 f), SD 61.7; Cv 7.3.9 @ V 2:193.

¹⁸² On the Buddha’s headaches, see Ap 387,24 = 1:300; UA 265. Cf DhA 1:357 (the Buddha stood in the hot sun, which later causes him a headache).

¹⁸³ On Viḍudabha, see DhA 4.3/1:337-361; Intro to J 465/4:144-153.

¹⁸⁴ On the Verañjā incident, see Pāc 3.1.1-2 @ V 3:7; VA 1:109, 178 f; DhA 2:153 f; ApA 125; cf J 3:494. In the 12th year, AA 2:124; cf BA 3.

- (11) As a physician, he (mistakenly) administered a purge on the son of a millionaire. Result: Diarrhoea and dysentery.¹⁸⁶
- (12) As Jotipāla, he reviled Kassapa Buddha as “bald-headed little recluse.” Result: Performs 6 years of painful self-mortification (and a year of spiritual quest) before gaining his own awakening. [4]
(Ap 299-301)¹⁸⁷

6.2.3 The *Piloti* [6.2.1] is unique in a number of ways. It is the only sutta attributed to the Buddha as recording teachings that is located on the shore of the mythical **Lake Anotatta** (Skt *anavatapta*) in the Himālayas. This alone suggests its legendary nature, as we do not have any suttas whose location is such a great distance away from the central Gangetic plain.

It is the only Apadāna text that deals with **bad karma and its unpleasant results**. Its mention of Anotatta (the Pali form of *anavatapta*) suggests a Mahāyāna influence (hence, is probably dated around 100 BCE at the earliest). In fact, it is derived from the Sanskrit Avadāna of the Mūlasarvāstivāda, entitled **Anavatapta Gāthā** (“the verses given at the Lake Anavatapta”), which, however, has accounts of both types of karma.¹⁸⁸ More importantly, for our purposes here, the *Piloti* [6.2.1] is the only text in the Pali Canon that seems to explain the Buddha’s sufferings as a result of his bad karma and attributing past-life episodes to explain, even justify, them.

Jonathan Walters says that “[t]here are in fact good reasons to suspect that *Pubbakammapiḷoti* has its origins in a ‘Hīnayāna’ tradition other than the Theravāda (eg, the Sarvāstivāda or Mahāsaṅghika).” (1990:77). In fact, the term *kamma,piḷoti* does not appear in the Pali Canon or Commentaries, except in reference to this text.

The Sanskrit form, *karma,piḷoti*, however, is found in the Divyāvadāna of the Sarvāstivādins. A few of the past stories are found in the Mahāvastu of the Mahāsaṅghikas (Mvst 1:29 ff.). It is likely, concludes Walters, that the author of the *Piloti* “drew his account, and his position, from non-Theravādin schools of the ‘Hīnayāna’.” (1990:77-79).

6.2.4 The *Pubba,kamma Piloti* [6.2.1] is significant in at least two ways. The first is that no one, not even the Bodhisatta, is free from karma and its consequences. As we act so we will harvest in due course, unless we work to remove the roots of karma itself.

Even if we have uprooted karma, we have not changed the past, so to speak. When the right conditions prevail, the fruits of past deeds will be tasted again, and again. However, the mind of an arhat, who is fully awakened, is untrammelled by such past traumas, nor will he create new future shocks.

The *Piloti* stories, secondly, are actually rather edifying, if we see them as part of a greater fabric of deeds of the person, the Bodhisattva, who will become the fully self-awakened buddha. It shows that he starts off just like any of us, warts and all. From the mud, rises the lotus. Any of us, can aspire to be a buddha, but we need only one. Once he has appeared, we only need to listen wisely to him and, with right practice, we will walk the same path to awaken just like him.

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¹⁸⁵ On the Buddha’s backaches, see **Sekha S** (M 53/1:354), SD 21.14; **Avassuta S** (S 35.243/4:184), SD 60.6; SA 3:52.

¹⁸⁶ On the Buddha’s dysentery, see **Māha Parinibbāna S** (D 16/2:128), SD 9.

¹⁸⁷ See Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, Singapore, 2002, 2013: ch 24 “Past karma of the Buddha.”

¹⁸⁸ It is part of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya in Tib tr. See H Bechert, *Sanskrittexte aus den Turfanakunden VI*, 1961:29 & S M Cutler, “The Pāli Apadāna Collection,” JPTS 20, 1994:14 f.

The (Middle-Length) Ghaṭṭikāra Discourse

M 81

[45] 1 Thus have I heard.¹⁸⁹

At one time the Blessed One was wandering amongst the Kosalas together with a large community of monks.

The Buddha smiles

2 Then, the Blessed One, having stepped down from the road, smiled at a certain place. The venerable Ānanda thought:

“What is the reason, what is the cause, for the Blessed One’s smile? Tathāgatas don’t smile without reason.”

2.2 So he arranged his (outer) robe¹⁹⁰ onto one shoulder, and putting his palms together in salutation to the Blessed One, asked him:

“Bhante, what is the reason, what is the cause, for the Blessed One’s smile? Tathāgatas do not smile without reason.”

3 “Once, Ānanda, in this place there was a wealthy and prosperous market town called Vaha,liṅga,¹⁹¹ with many people, crowded with people.

3.2 Now, the Blessed One, **Kassapa**,¹⁹² **the arhat, fully self-awakened**,¹⁹³ lived near the market town of Vaha,liṅga.

3.3 It was here, in fact, that the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, had his monastery.

It was here, in fact, that the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, sitting down, gave counsel to his community of monks.”¹⁹⁴

4 Then, the venerable Ānanda folded his outer robe¹⁹⁵ in four and spreading it out, said to the Blessed One:

4.2 “In that case, bhante, let the Blessed One be seated.

4.3 Then, this place will have been used by two arhats, fully self-awakened buddhas!”

4.4 The Blessed One sat down on the prepared seat and addressed the venerable Ānanda thus:

¹⁸⁹ **Gavesī S** (A 5.10) opens in a similar manner also in ref to Kassapa Buddha (A 5.10/3:214 f), SD 47.16; cf V 3:105; M 2:74; S 2:254. Comy notes that when smiling, the Buddha only shows the tips of his teeth but does not laugh out loud like an ordinary person (AA 3:305). The whole story occurs in **Mahāvastu** with interesting variations (Mvst 1:317-338). [1.3.1]

¹⁹⁰ “Robe,” *cīvara*. As a rule, monks must have the 3 robes (*cīvara*) with them at all times: the under- (or inner-) robe (*antara, vāsaka*, called “sabong” in Thai), the upper robe (*uttara, saṅga*) and the outer robe (*saṅghāṭi*), the last of which only a fully ordained monk has and is put over the left shoulder when the monk is “among houses” (Nis-saggiya 2, V 4:198), ie, outside monastic environments. The word *cīvara* is a general term referring to any of them. The first two are collectively called *s’antar’uttara* (id; VA 652). Cf Bhikkhuṇī Pācittiya 24. See V:H 2:1 n2 & Upasak, *Dictionary of Early Buddhist Monastic Terms*, 1975: *cīvara*; *kāsāya*; and above terms.

¹⁹¹ Ce so; Be *vega, liṅgam*; Ee Ke Se *vebha, liṅgam*. On Vaha,liṅga, see (3.1).

¹⁹² On the past buddha Kassapa, see (2).

¹⁹³ The full designation—“the Blessed One ... fully self-awakened—addressing Kassapa Buddha is repeated 65 times throughout the Sutta, as a recollection of the Buddha (*buddhānussati*): see **Buddhānussati**, SD 15.7.

¹⁹⁴ A similar incident (maybe an identical one) is recounted in **Gavesī S** (A 5.10/3:214-218) in connection with the layman Gavesī who kept precepts like Ghaṭṭikāra. Gavesī however later joins the order.

¹⁹⁵ “Outer robe,” *saṅghāṭi*, see above under “robes.”

GHAṬĪKĀRA AND JOTIPĀLA

The past buddha Kassapa at Vehaliṅga

5 “Once long ago, Ānanda, in this place there was a wealthy and prosperous market town called Vehaliṅga, with many people, crowded with people.

5.2 Now the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, lived near the market town Vehaliṅga.

It was here, in fact, that the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, had his monastery.

It was here, in fact, that the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, sitting down, [46] gave counsel to his community of monks.

Ghaṭī,kāra and Joti,pāla

6 Now, Ānanda, in Vehaliṅga, the supporter, the chief supporter, of the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, was a potter named **Ghaṭī,kāra**.¹⁹⁶

6.2 Now, Ānanda, the brahmin youth called **Joti,pāla**¹⁹⁷ was a companion, a beloved companion, of the potter Ghaṭīkāra.

6.3 (1) Ānanda, then the potter Ghaṭīkāra addressed the brahmin youth Jotipāla,

‘Come now, my dear Jotipāla, let’s approach and see the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*.

6.4 Seeing this Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, is regarded as good by me.’¹⁹⁸

6.5 Ānanda, when this was said, the brahmin youth Jotipāla said this to the potter Ghaṭīkāra,

‘Enough, my dear Ghaṭīkāra! What’s the good in seeing that bald-headed little recluse!’¹⁹⁹

6.6 (2) For the second time, Ānanda, *the potter Ghaṭīkāra addressed the brahmin youth Jotipāla,*

‘Come now, my dear Jotipāla, let’s approach and see the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, the fully self-awakened*.

Seeing this Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, the fully self-awakened, is regarded as good by me.

For the second time, *Ānanda, the brahmin youth Jotipāla said this to the potter Ghaṭīkāra,*

‘Enough, my dear Ghaṭīkāra! What’s the good in seeing that bald-headed little recluse!’

6.7 (3) For the third time, Ānanda, *the potter Ghaṭīkāra addressed the brahmin youth Jotipāla,*

‘Come now, my dear Jotipāla, let’s approach and see the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*.

Seeing this Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, the fully self-awakened, is regarded as good by me.’

For the third time, *Ānanda, the brahmin youth Jotipāla said this to the potter Ghaṭīkāra,*

‘Enough, my dear Ghaṭīkāra! What’s the good in seeing that bald-headed little recluse!’

¹⁹⁶ “Ghaṭīkāra” (“pot-maker”), CeEe so; Be Se *ghaṭī,kāro*. See (3).

¹⁹⁷ Joti,pāla, brahmin youth (*maṇava*): see (4).

¹⁹⁸ *Sādhu, sammataṃ hi me tassa bhagavato dassanaṃ arahato sammāsambuddh assāti*. “Regarded as good,” *sādhu, sammata*, recurs in **Sāmaññaphala S** (D 2,2/1:47, etc), SD 8.10 & **Kutūhala Sālā S** (S 44.9/4:398, etc), SD 23.15. In both cases, applied to the 6 heterodox teachers: ~ *bahu, janassa*, “... by the masses.”

¹⁹⁹ *Alaṃ samma ghaṭīkāra, kiṃ pana tena muṇḍakena samaṇakena diṭṭhenāti*. The expression, “little bald-head of a recluse” (*muṇḍaka samaṇaka*) is common pejorative that brahmins used against Buddhist monastics: eg **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3,1.10.2) n, SD 21.1; also **Māra Tajjanīya S** (M 50,13.1), SD 36.4; **Caṅkī S** (M 95,34.2), SD 21.15. See **Akkosa(ka) Bhāradvāja Vatthu** (DhA 26.16/4:160-163), SD 45.5.

The pejorative expression is used by Jotipāla a total of 7 times, ie, rejecting Ghaṭīkāra’s 7 requests to meet the Buddha [§§6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 8.4]—which is way beyond the traditional 3 times [eg SD 44.1 (2.3.3)]. Ghaṭīkāra’s persistence evokes a sense of premonition of the defiance of tradition that Jotipāla would show in his last life as our Buddha. Jotipāla’s change of heart—the 8th response, an acquiescence—is thus his own decision to meet the Buddha.

6.8 ‘In that case, my dear Jotipāla, let’s take a back-scrubber²⁰⁰ and bath-powder, and go down to the river to wash.’²⁰¹

Ānanda, the brahmin youth Jotipāla then answered, ‘Very well, dear friend,’ to the potter Ghaṭṭikāra.

Ghaṭṭikāra tricks Jotipāla to be nearer the Buddha

(4) Then, Ānanda, Ghaṭṭikāra the potter and Jotipāla the brahmin youth, taking a back-scrubber and bath-powder, went down to the river to wash.

7 Then, Ānanda, the potter Ghaṭṭikāra addressed the young brahmin Jotipāla, thus,

‘My dear Jotipāla, the monastery park of this Blessed One, Kassapa, *the arhat, fully-self-awakened*, is not far away.

7.2 Come on, my dear Jotipāla, let us approach and see the Blessed One, Kassapa, *the arhat, fully self-awakened*.

7.3 Seeing this Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, is regarded as good by me.’

7.4 Ānanda, when this was said, the brahmin youth Jotipāla said this to the potter Ghaṭṭikāra, ‘Enough, my dear Ghaṭṭikāra! What’s the good [47] in seeing that bald-headed little recluse!’²⁰²

7.5 (5) For the second time, *Ānanda, the potter Ghaṭṭikāra addressed the brahmin youth Jotipāla, ‘My dear Jotipāla, the monastery park of this Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, the fully self-awakened is not far away.*

Come on, my dear Jotipāla, let us approach and see the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened.

Seeing this Blessed One, the arhat, fully self-awakened, is regarded as good by me.’

For the second time, *Ānanda, the brahmin youth Jotipāla said this to the potter Ghaṭṭikāra,*

‘Enough, my dear Ghaṭṭikāra! What’s the good in seeing that bald-headed little recluse!’

7.6 (6) For the third time, *Ānanda, the potter Ghaṭṭikāra addressed the brahmin youth Jotipāla, ‘My dear Jotipāla, the monastery park of this Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully-self-awakened, is not far away.*

Come on, my dear Jotipāla, let us approach and see the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, the fully self-awakened.

Seeing this Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened, is regarded as good by me.’

For the third time, *Ānanda, the brahmin youth Jotipāla said this to the potter Ghaṭṭikāra,*

‘Enough, my dear Ghaṭṭikāra! What’s the good in seeing that bald-headed little recluse!’

Jotipāla is finally convinced

8 (7) Then, Ānanda, the potter Ghaṭṭikāra, laying hold of Jotipāla by his waist-band,²⁰³ said this to him,

‘My dear Jotipāla, the monastery park of this Blessed One, Kassapa, *the arhat, fully-self-awakened*, is not far away.

8.2 Come on, my dear Jotipāla, let us approach and see the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened!*

8.3 Seeing this *Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, is regarded as good by me.’

8.4 Then, Ānanda, the brahmin youth Jotipāla undid his waist-band, and said,

‘Enough, my dear Ghaṭṭikāra! What’s the good in seeing that bald-headed little recluse!’

9 Then, Ānanda, when the brahmin youth Jotipāla had just washed, the potter Ghaṭṭikāra seized him by his hair, and said,

²⁰⁰ “Back-scrubber,” *sotti*: see (3.2).

²⁰¹ *Tena hi samma joti.pāla sotti, sinānim* ādāya nadim gamissāma sināyitun ’ti.* [*Be so; Ce Ee *sottim sinānim*; Ke Se *sotti, sinānam*].

²⁰² *Alam samma ghaṭṭikāra, kim pana tena muṇḍakena samaṇakena diṭṭhenāti.*

²⁰³ “Waist-band,” *ovaṭṭika* or *ovaṭṭikā* (BHS) (or *ovaṭṭiyā*; cf Skt *apavṛtta*): “what is rolled up or down; a fold, a tuck; a hem; a seam; a girdle, a waist-cloth, a fold of material at the waist (in which objects were carried)” (DP).

‘My dear Jotipāla, the monastery park of this Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully-self-awakened, is not far away.

Come on, my dear Jotipāla, let us approach and see the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, the fully self-awakened!

Seeing this Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened, is regarded as good by me.’

9.2 Then, Ānanda, he said to the brahmin youth Jotipāla,

‘Wonderful indeed, sir! Marvellous indeed, sir! That this potter Ghaṭṭikāra, who is of lowly birth, should think of seizing me by my freshly lustrated hair!²⁰⁴ Surely, I think that this is no small matter!²⁰⁵

9.3 He said this to the potter Ghaṭṭikāra,

‘Do you, my dear Ghaṭṭikāra, have to go as far as this?’²⁰⁶

9.4 ‘I have to, my dear Jotipāla, go as far as this! For [48] seeing this Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened, is regarded as good by me!’

‘In that case, Ghaṭṭikāra, let go (of my hair) then. We will go.’²⁰⁷

Ghaṭṭikāra and Jotipāla meet the Buddha

10 Then, Ānanda, the potter Ghaṭṭikāra and the brahmin youth Jotipāla approached the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened.

10.2 The potter Ghaṭṭikāra, having gone up to the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened, saluted him, and then sat down at one side.

10.3 But the brahmin youth Jotipāla (only) exchanged greetings with the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened. When this courteous and friendly exchange was concluded, he sat down at one side.²⁰⁸

10.4 Ānanda, sitting thus at one side, the potter Ghaṭṭikāra said this to the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened,

‘This, bhante, is the brahmin youth, Jotipāla, my companion, a beloved friend. Might the Blessed One teach him the Dharma.’²⁰⁹

10.5 Then, Ānanda, the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully-self-awakened, instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened the potter Ghaṭṭikāra and the brahmin youth Jotipāla with a Dharma talk,

10.6 Then, Ānanda, the potter Ghaṭṭikāra and the brahmin youth Jotipāla, having been *instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened with a Dharma talk,*

rose from their seats, saluted the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened, circum-ambulated rightwise, and left.

²⁰⁴ *Acchariyam vata bho, abbhutam vata bho, yatra hi nāmāyaṃ ghaṭṭikāro kumbhakāro ittara,jacco samāno amhākaṃ sīsāṃ,nhātānaṃ kesesu parāmasitabbaṃ maññissati.* In ancient India, the head was the most sacred spot in a person, and anyone who violated it, say by merely touching it, would, as a rule, be met with violent reaction, even being killed by the “victim” (usu a higher caste member)—a belief and practice that was also common amongst the traditional societies of SE Asia, esp royalties. In the Sutta, Ghaṭṭikāra (a lowly potter) risks violating such a custom to persuade Jotipāla (a brahmin) to meet the Buddha. Here again, we see a tradition-breaking act presaging the beginnings of a dramatic change in Jotipāla’s life.

²⁰⁵ *Na vat’idaṃ kira orakaṃ maññe bhavissatīti.* He finally realizes that there must be some great significance to their going to visit the Buddha on account of Ghaṭṭikāra’s insistence (see MA 3:281).

²⁰⁶ *Yāv’etaḍ-ohi’pi* [Ce Ee Ke Se so; Be *Yāvataḍohipi*] *samma ghaṭṭikārā’ti.* Comy glosses it as “to such an extreme” (*yāv’eta,paramaṃ*) (MA 3:281), meaning: “Besides trying to persuade me and taking me by the waist-band, do you really have to go as far as taking me by the hair, to make me go there?” See [3.3].

²⁰⁷ *Tena hi samma ghaṭṭikāra muñca gamissāmāti.*

²⁰⁸ Note here that Jotipāla does not salute the Buddha, but only exchanges polite greetings. Cf §12, where he, along with Ghaṭṭikāra, do salute the Buddha on meeting him.

²⁰⁹ *Imassa bhagavā dhammaṃ desetāti.* Comy says that the teaching is concerned with the attaining of mindfulness regarding one’s past lives (*pubbe,nivāsa*) (MA 3:282).

Jotipāla renounces the world

11 Then, Ānanda, the brahmin youth Jotipāla said this to the potter Ghaṭikāra,
 ‘My dear Ghaṭikāra, now that you have heard this Dharma, why don’t you go forth from home into the houseless state?’
 ‘Surely, my dear Jotipāla, you know me:²¹⁰ I have to support my mother and father who are blind and aged.’

‘In that case, my dear Ghaṭikāra, I will go forth from home into the houseless state!’

12 Then, Ānanda, the potter Ghaṭikāra and the brahmin youth Jotipāla approached the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*. [49]

Having gone up to the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, the potter Ghaṭikāra saluted him. Having saluted him, the potter Ghaṭikāra sat down at one side.²¹¹

12.3 Ānanda, sitting thus at one side, the potter Ghaṭikāra said this to the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*,

‘Bhante, please let this brahmin youth, Jotipāla, my companion, a beloved friend, go forth.’²¹²

12.4 Ānanda, the brahmin youth received the going-forth in the presence of the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, and received the ordination.²¹³

Kassapa Buddha meets Kikī in Benares

13 Then, Ānanda, not long after the brahmin youth Jotipāla was ordained—half a month after he was ordained—the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, having stayed in Vehalinga as long as he wished, left on a walk for Benares, walking by stages,²¹⁴ until he arrived in Benares.

13.2 There, Ānanda, the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, stayed in the deer park at Isi,patana, outside Benares.

14 Now, Ānanda, **Kikī**,²¹⁵ king of Kāsī, heard that the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully-self-awakened*, had reached Benares, and was staying in the deer park in Isipatana outside Benares.

14.2 Then, Ānanda, Kikī, the king of Kāsī, had many grand vehicles harnessed, mounted a grand vehicle, and, with the many grand vehicles, set out for Benares, with the great pomp of royalty to see the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*.

14.3 He went in his vehicle as far as the ground allowed.²¹⁶ Then, he dismounted and, going on foot, approached the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*.

Having gone up to the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, he saluted him, and sat down at one side.

14.4 Sitting thus at one side, Kikī, the king of Kāsī, exchanged greetings with the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*. When this courteous and friendly exchange was concluded, he sat down at one side.

²¹⁰ *Nanu maṃ samma jotipāla jānāsi*.

²¹¹ Note here again that Jotipāla does not salute the Buddha and does not “sit down at one side.” He may be standing at one side, which is regarded as rude when the Buddha is sitting down.

²¹² *Ayaṃ me bhante jotipālo māṇavo sahāyo piyasahāyo, imaṃ bhagavā pabbājetūti*.

²¹³ Comy says that all Bodhisattvas go forth in the Buddha’s presence. Jotipāla fulfills all the recluse’s duties (*samaṇa, dhamma*), incl the 13 ascetic practices [SD 3.15 (2)], but does not make any effort to attain the path or fruits (which would end his bodhisattva career). He cultivates insight wisdom or stages of purification only up to that of “conformity knowledge” (*anuloma nāṇa*) (MA 3:282). This is the stage just before the “change of lineage” (*gotra, bhū*) or attaining of streamwinning: see SD 28.3 (1.3). See (4.3.2.1).

²¹⁴ “Wandering by stages,” *anupubbena cārikaṃ caramāno*, lit “walking the walk in a gradual manner,” ie, wandering about teaching the Dharma and ministering the people.

²¹⁵ “Kikī” (Skt *kṛkī*): see (3.4).

²¹⁶ As this is the forest edge, the ways are likely to be dirt paths, which ends just before the forest where the Buddha and his monks reside.

Ānanda, to Kikī, the king of Kāsī, sitting thus at one side, the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully-self-awakened*, instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened Kikī, the king of Kāsī, with a Dharma talk.

15 Then, Ānanda, Kikī, the king of Kāsī, having been instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened by the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, with a Dharma talk, said this to the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, [50]

15.2 ‘Bhante, may the Blessed One, along with the community of monks, consent to a meal from me tomorrow!’

The Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, consented by remaining silent.

15.3 Then, Ānanda, Kikī, the king of Kāsī, knowing of the consent of the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, rose from this seat, saluted the Blessed One, and circumambulated keeping his right to him, and left.

16 Then, Ānanda, with the passing of the night,²¹⁷ Kikī, the king of Kāsī, had exquisite food, hard and soft, prepared in his own residence:

fragrant red rice,²¹⁸ with black granules removed, and various curries²¹⁹ and numerous dishes.²²⁰

16.2 When it was time, he had it announced to the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, ‘Bhante, it is time; the meal is ready!’²²¹

17 Then, Ānanda, early at dawn, the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, having dressed himself, taking bowl and robe, approached the residence of Kikī, the king of Kāsī. Then, he sat down, along with the community of monks, on the prepared seats.

17.2 Then, Ānanda, Kikī, the king of Kāsī, with his own hands, served the community of monks, headed by the Buddha, with exquisite food, hard and soft, and satisfied them.²²²

Kikī invites the Buddha for the rains

17.3 Then, Ānanda, when the Blessed One, *Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened*, had finished his meal, and washed his bowl and hands,²²³ Kikī, the king of Kāsī, taking a certain low seat, sat down at one side.

17.4 Then, Ānanda, Kikī, the king of Kāsī, sitting thus at one side, said to the Blessed One, ‘Let the Blessed One consent to spending the rains-retreat at Benares. There will be suitable support for the sangha.’²²⁴

‘I’m sorry, maharajah, the rains-retreat has already been accepted by me.’²²⁵

²¹⁷ “With the passing of the night,” *rattiyā accayena*. This would be about 4 am.

²¹⁸ *Paṇḍu, muṭikassa* [Ce Ee so; Be ~*puṭakassa*; Ke Se~*mudikassa*; Comy ~*muṭakassa*] *sālino vigata, kālakam aneka, sūpaṃ aneka, vyañjanam*. See (3.5).

²¹⁹ “Curries” (*sūpa*), pl of “curry,” “A preparation of meat, fruit or vegetables, cooked with a quantity of bruised spices and turmeric, and used as a relish or flavouring, esp for dishes composed of or served with rice. Hence, a *curry* = a dish or stew (of rice, meat, etc) flavoured with this preparation (or with curry-powder).” (OED).

²²⁰ *Paṇḍu, muṭikassa sālino vigata, kālakam aneka, sūpaṃ aneka, vyañjanam*.

²²¹ *Kālam ārocāpesi ‘kālo bhante niṭṭhitam bhattan’ ti*.

²²² *Atha kho ānanda kikī kāsī, rājā buddha-p, pumukham bhikkhu, saṅgham pañitena khādanīyena bhojanīyena sahatthā santappesi sampavāresi*.

²²³ *Atha kho ... bhagavantam ... bhuttāvim onīta, patta, pāṇim*. “Washed his bowl and hands,” *onīta, patta, pāṇim*, is stock: **D 16/2**:88,24, 97,32; **M 35/1**:236,31, **58/1**:393,30, **81/2**:50,20, **85/2**:93,10, **92/2**:146 (=Sn p111,8), **127/3**:-145,25; **S 35.133/4**:122,19, 123,27, **55.26/5**:384,19; **A 4.57/2**:63,3, **5.33/3**:37,10, **7.53/4**:64,23, **8.12/4**:188,10; **U 4.3/38,34**, **8.6/89,16**; **Sn 3.7**/p111,8. It is sometimes tr as “(having) withdrawn his hand from the bowl,” esp when preceded by *dhota, hattham*, as in V 1:244: *bhagavantam dhota, hattham onīta, patta, pāṇim*, “the Blessed One washed his hands, and withdrew his hand from the bowl” (V 1:244 §13.2 @ SD 45.7b). But see important long n at Sn:N 281 ad Sn p111 (§25.4); also S:B 1418 n135. See CPD: *onīta-patta-pāṇi* & DP: *onīta*.

²²⁴ *Adhivāsetu me bhante bhagavā bārāṇasiyam vass’āvāsam, eva, rūpaṃ saṅghassa upaṭṭhānam bhavissatīti*.

²²⁵ *Alam mahārāja adhivuttho me vass’āvāso’ti*. Here, *adhivuttho* is past part of *adhivāseti*, “to consent, accept.” *Adhivuttho me vass’āvāso* is passive: to king Kikī, M 2:50,27; to Licchavis, Ambapālī to Licchavīs, D 2:97,14 (cf V 1:232,25); cf to Anāthapiṇḍika, ~*am mayā ... bhattam*, DhA 3:469,4. Cf active: Buddha to Licchavīs, *adhivuttho-*

For the second time, Ānanda, Kikī, the king of Kāsī, sitting thus at one side, said to the Blessed One, ‘Let the Blessed One consent to spending the rains-retreat at Benares. There will be suitable support for the sangha.’

‘I’m sorry, maharajah, the rains-retreat has already been accepted by me.’

For the third time, Ānanda, Kikī, the king of Kāsī, sitting thus at one side, said to the Blessed One, ‘Let the Blessed One consent to spending the rains-retreat at Benares. There will be suitable support for the sangha.’

‘I’m sorry, maharajah, the rains-retreat has already been accepted by me.’

17.5 Then, Ānanda, Kikī, the king of Kāsī thought,

‘The Blessed One, Kassapa, [51] the arhat, fully self-awakened, does not consent to spending the rains-retreat in Benares!’ He was anxious and depressed.²²⁶

Ghaṭṭikāra as chief supporter

18 Then, Ānanda, Kikī, the king of Kāsī, said to the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened,

²²⁷ ‘Is there, bhante, someone else who is a better supporter than I?’²²⁸

18.2 ‘There is, maharajah, a village market-town²²⁹ named Vehaliṅga, where there is a potter named Ghaṭṭikāra. He is my chief supporter.

18.3 But, you, maharajah, think,

‘The Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened, does not consent to spending the rains-retreat in Benares! And so you are anxious and depressed.’

18.4 This is not so with this potter Ghaṭṭikāra, nor will it be so.

GHAṬṬIKĀRA’S LIST OF PROGRESSIVE GOODNESS²³⁰

Ghaṭṭikāra’s attainments

18.5 Maharajah, the potter Ghaṭṭikāra has gone to the Buddha for refuge, gone to the Dharma for refuge, gone to the sangha for refuge.

18.6 Maharajah, the potter Ghaṭṭikāra is one who

(1) abstains from killing

(2) abstains from taking the not-given

(3) abstains from sexual misconduct

(4) abstains from false speech

*pānātipātā paṭivirato hoti,
adinn’ādānā paṭivirato hoti,
kāmesu micchācārā paṭivirato hoti,²³¹
musā,vādā paṭivirato hoti,*

‘mhi ... amba,pāliyā gaṇikāya bhataṃ, V 1:232,25. Cf “The Blessed One has consented”: Bhesika to Lohicca, D 1:226,4; to prince Bodhi, M 2:92,5.

²²⁶ *Atha kho ānanda kikīssa kāsī,rañño na me kassapo bhagavā araham sammā,sambuddho adhvāseti bārāṇasiyam vass’āvāsan’ti ahu-d-eva aññath’attaṃ ahu domanassam. Aññath’atta = aññathā (“different”) + -tta (abstract n) or –atta (minded), “anxious.” The latter is clearly the form in this context. The phrase ahu-d-eva aññath’attaṃ ahu domanassam recurs in Laṭṭikikōpama S (M 66,6.3+5/1:448), SD 28.11. Aññathatta recurs with “change” (vipariṇāma) in Cātumā S (M 67), where it has the dual meanings of (lit) “becoming otherwise” and (fig) “anxious” (M 67,7.2+3/1:457), SD 34.7. See also Piṇḍolya S (S 22.80,6/3:91) + SD 28.9a (2).*

²²⁷ From hereon, the nested dialogue between Kassapa Buddha and king Kikī continues, without out Buddha addressing Ānanda, until §20.11.

²²⁸ *Atthi nu kho bhante añño koci mayā upaṭṭhāka,taro’ti.*

²²⁹ “Village market-town,” *gāma,nigama* here clearly a karmadharaya, meaning “a village that is a market-town,” that is, “partly a village, partly a market-town.” There, of course, the poss that it is a twin-town with the same name, like Nādikā (V 1:230 ff; D 2:90 f, 200; M 1:205): see **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16,2.5) n, SD 9. In **Sevanā S** (A 9.6-4:368,29+31-34, 369,2+3), SD 83.7 = **Samatha S** (A 20.54/5:101,20+23+26+27+29), SD 83.8 *gāma,nigāma* is clearly a dvandva: the passage recurs in **Sevitabbāsevitabba S** (M 114,39/3:58,27+28), SD 39.8.

²³⁰ This description of Ghaṭṭikāra’s qualities ends at §21.10.

²³¹ Below, he is stated as observing “celibacy” [§18.9].

- (5) abstains from strong drinks, distilled drinks
and intoxicants that cause heedlessness *surā, meraya, majja, pamāda-t, thānā
paṭivirato hoti.*²³²
- 18.7 Maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra is
accomplished in wise confidence²³³ in the Buddha,
accomplished in wise confidence in the Dharma and
accomplished in wise confidence in the sangha, and
accomplished in the moral virtue pleasing to the noble ones.
- 18.8 Maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra is
free from doubt about suffering,
free from doubt about the arising of suffering,
free from doubt about the cessation of suffering, and
free from doubt about the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

Ghaṭikāra lives like a monk

- 18.9 Maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra²³⁴
eats only one meal a day;
observes celibacy, is virtuous, of good character.
- 18.10 Maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra has laid aside gems and gold,²³⁵ and has given up gold and
silver.²³⁶
- 18.11 Maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra does not dig the ground with his hands or with a pestle²³⁷ (to
look for clay)—taking only the clay he finds in broken ground on the river bank or debris pushed up by
rats²³⁸—and taking only what he needs,²³⁹ he brings it home on a carrying-pole.²⁴⁰
- 18.12 When he has made a pot he says:
“Let anyone who wishes leave a portion of rice or a portion of beans or a portion of chick peas,²⁴¹ and
let one take what one likes (in exchange).”²⁴²
- 18.13 Maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra supports his blind old parents. [52]

²³² M 10,2/1:55 (SD 13.3).

²³³ “Wise confidence,” *avecca-p, pasāda*. **Saddhā**, “faith, confidence, trust,” is the seed (Sn 77) from which arises
“confidence” (*pasāda*). There are 2 kinds of faith: (1) “rootless faith” (*amūlaka, saddhā*), baseless or irrational faith,
blind faith. (M 2:170); (2) “faith with a good cause” (*ākāravati, saddhā*), faith founded on seeing (M 1:320,8, 401,-
23). Here the latter is meant. See D 2:93, 217; M 1:37, 46, 2:51, 3:253; S 2:69, 4:271, 5:343, 345, 405; A 1:222,
2:56, 3:212, 332, 451, 4:406, 5:120; AA 1:396, 455; DhA 1:76; UA 109. *Amūlaka* = “not seen, not heard, not sus-
pected” (V 2:243 3:163 & Comy).

²³⁴ From here until §18.2, Ghaṭikāra is presented as a layman who lives virtually as a monk [1.4.2.2].

²³⁵ “Gems and gold,” *maṇi, suvaṇṇa*, ie gems and wrought gold (ornaments).

²³⁶ “Gold and silver,” *jāta.rūpa, rajata*, ie gold and money.

²³⁷ “With a pestle,” *musalena*. The word *musala* is often paired with *udukkhala*, “mortar” (V 1:202; Thī 111; Ap
552; J 2:428, 6:161). I render *musalena* here literally, unsure of its exact application: Ghaṭikāra prob breaks the hard
ground with the pestle, or crushes dry clay and adds water to it to soften it up. Horner renders *na musalena na
sahatthā* as “not ... either with a spade or with his own hands” (M:H 2:248); Ñāṇamoli & Bodhi: “not ... using a
pick or with his own hands” (M:ÑB 674).

²³⁸ “Debris pushed up by rats,” *mūsik ’ukkuro*.

²³⁹ “Only what he needs,” *kāmena* (Se & PTS), alt tr “only what suits his purpose” or more loosely “as he desir-
es.” My tr here is conjectural based on the context. See foll n.

²⁴⁰ “On a pole,” *kājena* for *kāmena*: see prec n. A *kāja* is a carrying-pole (V 1:245; M 3:148; S 1:175; A 4:163; J
1:9, 3:325), a pingo (DhA 4:128, 232); probably syn with *byābhangī* (SA 3:72) or similar to it (Tha 623).

²⁴¹ “Chick peas,” reading *kaḷāya* for *kālāya* (DP sv).

²⁴² “Let one take what one likes,” *yam icchati tam haratu*. Comy: He does not trade in the vessels he has made.
But once people know they can take what they like, they bring useful materials from the forest (MA 3:284 f).

18.14 Maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra, having destroyed the 5 lower fetters,²⁴³ is one who will reappear spontaneously (in the Pure Abodes)²⁴⁴ and there attain final nirvana without ever returning from that world.

Ghaṭikāra's absent meal offering (1)

19 Maharajah, on one occasion, I stayed at the village market-town named Vehaliṅga.

Then, maharajah, early at dawn, having dressed myself, taking bowl and robe, I approached the parents of the potter Ghaṭikāra.

19.2 Having gone up to the parents of the potter Ghaṭikāra, I said this to them,

“Well now, where has the good potter [*bhaggava*]²⁴⁵ gone, please?”²⁴⁶

19.3 “Bhante, your supporter has gone out. Please take rice from inside the pot, curry from the pan, and partake of them.”²⁴⁷

Then, I, maharajah, having taken rice from the pot, curry from the pan, and eaten them, rose from my seat and departed.

19.4 Then, maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra approached his parents and said,

“Who has taken rice from the pot, curry from the pan, eaten them, and then rising from his seat, departed?”

“My dear (*tata*), the Blessed One, *Kassapa*, the arhat, fully-self-awakened, has taken rice from the pot, curry from the pan, eaten them, and then rising from his seat, departed.”

19.5 Then, maharajah, it occurred to the potter Ghaṭikāra,

“Oh, a gain for me! What a great gain for me! That the Blessed One, *Kassapa*, the arhat, fully-self-awakened, has such trust in me!”²⁴⁸

19.6 Now, maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra did not lose his zest and joy²⁴⁹ for half a month, and his parents did not lose their zest and joy for a week.

²⁴³ “The 5 lower fetters,” *orambhāgiyā saṃyojanā*. The 10 fetters are: Personality view (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*), spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*), attachment to rules and rites (*sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa*), sensual lust (*kāma, rāga*), repulsion (*paṭigha*), greed for form existence (*rūpa, rāga*), greed for formless existence (*arūpa, rāga*), conceit (*māna*), restlessness (*uddhacca*), ignorance (*avijjā*) (S 5:61, A 5:13, Vbh 377). In some places, no. 5 (*paṭigha*) is replaced by illwill (*vyāpāda*). The first 5 are the lower fetters (*orambhāgiya*), and the rest, the higher fetters (*uddhambhāgiya*).

²⁴⁴ “The Pure Abodes,” *suddh'āvāsa*. A non-returner (*anāgāmi*), on overcoming the 5 lower fetters (*orambhāgiya saṃyojanā*) [see prev n], is reborn in the Brahmā world known as the Pure Abodes (*suddh'āvāsa*), the five highest heavens of the form world (*rūpa, loka*) where only non-returners assume their last birth to become arhats and nirvana. These worlds are Āviha (“Non-declining”), Ātappa (“Unworried”), Sudassā (“Clearly Visible”), Sudassī (“Clear-visioned”) and Akaniṭṭhā (“Highest”) (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46). See **Is rebirth immediate?** SD 2.17.

²⁴⁵ *Bhaggava*: cf Skt *bhārgava*, Mvst 3:347 (see Mvst:J 3:344 n6). It is possible that Bhaggava is a patronymic of the Vedic god Bhṛgu, the mythical discoverer of fire, and potters were so named because they relied on fire in their trade (see PED: bhaggava). DPPN under “Bhaggava,” says that it is a “generic name for all potters.” Cf **Kumbha-kāra J** (J 408) where the Bodhisattva is himself a potter (J 408/3:375-383).

²⁴⁶ *Handa ko nu kho ayam bhaggavo [Ce bhagavo] gato 'ti.*

²⁴⁷ *Nikkhanto kho te bhante upaṭṭhāko, anto, kumbhiyā odanam gahetvā pariyogā sūpaṃ gahetvā paribhuñjāti.* We would today understand both *kumbhī* and *pariyoga* as “pot,” but the former (for rice) is larger than the latter (for curry). There is usually only one for the former (rice) and a number of the latter (for curries), esp on a common dining table or festivities.

²⁴⁸ *Lābhā vata me, suladdham vata me, yassa me kassapo bhagavā araham sammā, sambuddho evam abhivissattho 'ti.*

²⁴⁹ “Zest and joy,” *pīti, sukha*. These are two of the dhyana-factors (*jhān'āṅga*) of the 1st and the 2nd dhyanas: see **Dhyana**, SD 8.4 (5.1.1+5.2.2). Here, the allusion is to their natural response to the good deed they have done, but it is clear that as a non-returner, Ghaṭikāra would easily be able to attain dhyana. It is also possible that his parents, too, are dhyana-attainers.

Ghaṭikāra's absent meal offering (2)

20 At one time, maharajah, I was staying at this very village market-town of Vehaliṅga.

Then, maharajah, early at dawn, having dressed myself, taking bowl and robe, approach the parents of the potter Ghaṭikāra, and said this to them,

“Well now, where has the good potter gone, please?”

20.2 “Bhante, your supporter has gone out. Please take dumplings²⁵⁰ from inside the basket, curry from the pan, and partake of them.”

Then, I, maharajah, having taken dumplings from the basket, [53] curry from the pan, and eaten them, rose from my seat and departed.

20.3 Then, maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra approached his parents and said,

“Who has taken dumplings from the basket, curry from the pan, eaten them, and then rising from his seat, departed?”

“My dear, the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened, has taken dumplings from the basket, curry from the pan, eaten them, and then rising from his seat, departed.”

20.4 Then, maharajah, it occurred to the potter Ghaṭikāra,

“Oh, a gain for me! What a great gain for me! That the Blessed One, Kassapa, the arhat, fully-self-awakened, has such trust in me!”

20.5 Now, maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra did not lose his zest and joy for half a month, and his parents did not lose their zest and joy for a week.

Ghaṭikāra's absent gift of thatch

21 At one time, maharajah, I was staying at this very village market-town of Vehaliṅga.

At that time, a hut [the fragrant cell] leaked.²⁵¹

21.2 Then, maharajah, I addressed the monks, thus,

“Go, bhikshus, to the potter's Ghaṭikāra's house and find out if there is any grass there.”

21.3 Maharajah, when this was said, the monks told me,

“Bhante, there is no grass in the potter Ghaṭikāra's house, but there is grass thatch over his workshop.”²⁵²

21.4 “Go, bhikshus, and strip away the grass thatch on the potter Ghaṭikāra's workshop roof.”²⁵³

Then, maharajah, the monks stripped away the grass thatch on the potter Ghaṭikāra's workshop roof.

21.5 Then, maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra's parents said to the monks,

“Who is removing the grass thatch of the workshop?”²⁵⁴

21.6 “The monks, sister.²⁵⁵ The roof of the dwelling of the Blessed One Kassapa, the arhat, fully self-awakened, is leaking.”

“Take, bhante! Take, Bhadra,mukha [Blessed Faces]!”²⁵⁶

21.7 Then, maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra approached his parents, and said,

“Who has stripped the roof thatch of the workshop?”

²⁵⁰ “A pot of porridge,” *kaḷopiya kummāsaṃ*. A *kaḷopī* is a bamboo basket or container. *Kummāsa* (Skt *kulmāsa*), here prob a kind of dumpling: see (3.6).

²⁵¹ *Tena kho pana samayena kuṭi [Ce gandha,kuṭi] ovassati.*

²⁵² *N'atthi kho bhante ghaṭikārassa kumbha,kārassa nivesane tiṇaṃ, atthi ca khv-āssa avesanaṃ [Be āvesane] tiṇa-c, chadanān'ti.*

²⁵³ *Gacchatha bhikkhave ghaṭikārassa kumbha,kārassa āvesanaṃ uttiṇaṃ karoṭhāti.*

²⁵⁴ *Ke āsavesanaṃ uttiṇaṃ karontīti.*

²⁵⁵ On this vocative, see (1.1.5.4) n.

²⁵⁶ *Bhadra,mukha* or *bhadda,mukha*, lit “auspicious-faced,” one whose face brings blessings, meaning something like “my noble friend,” or “this honourable one,” or even “this dear fellow,” a complimentary or affectionate or intimate mode of address (M 2:53,27, 210,11 f; S 1:74; J 2:261; Vism 92,21; J 2:261,14). See S:RD 1:100 n3, S:B 401 n211.

“The monks, my dear. It seems that the roof of the Blessed One Kassapa, *the arhat, fully-self-awakened*, is leaking.”

21.8 Then, maharajah, it occurred to the potter Ghaṭikāra,

“Oh, a gain for me! What a great gain for me! That the Blessed One, Kassapa, *the arhat, fully-self-awakened*, has such trust in me!”

21.9 Now, maharajah, the potter Ghaṭikāra [54] did not lose his zest and joy for half a month, and his parents did not lose their zest and joy for a week.

21.10 Then, maharajah, throughout the three months (of the rains),²⁵⁷ the workshop stood covered by the sky, but no rain fell (into it).²⁵⁸ And such, maharajah, is the potter Ghaṭikāra!

King Kikī makes a great offering to Ghaṭikāra

21.11 ‘A gain, bhante, it is for the potter Ghaṭikāra! A great gain, bhante, for the potter Ghaṭikāra, in whom the Blessed One shows such trust!’²⁵⁹

22 Then, Ānanda, Kikī, the king of Kāsī, sent 500 cart-loads of husked rice, and sacks of rice §16.1], and appropriate curry ingredients to go with them.²⁶⁰

23 Then, Ānanda, the king’s men approached the potter Ghaṭikāra and said,

‘These 500 cart-loads of husked rice, and sacks of [red?] yellow rice [§16], and appropriate curry ingredients to go with them, have been sent by Kikī, king of Kāsī. Bhante, please accept them.’

24 ‘The rajah, indeed, has many duties, much work. I have enough, let it be for the king.’²⁶¹

CONCLUSION

Gotama Buddha as Jotipāla

25 Now, Ānanda, you might think thus,

“Surely, at that time the brahmin youth Jotipāla was someone else.”

You should not see it thus, Ānanda, at that time, I was that brahmin youth Jotipāla.”

26 The Blessed One said this. The venerable joyfully approved of the Blessed One’s word.

— evaṃ —

[For **Bibliography**, see SD 49.15]

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²⁵⁷ Comy says that the Buddha has already passed one of the 4 months of the rains before he sends for the grass thatch (MA 3:286).

²⁵⁸ *Atha kho mahā, rāja āvesanaṃ sabbantaṃ temāsaṃ ākāsa-c, chadanam aṭṭhāsi, na devo ’tivassi.*

²⁵⁹ The nested dialogue (without Ānanda being addressed) between Kassapa Buddha and king Kikī, which begins at §19.1, ends here.

²⁶⁰ *Atha kho ānanda kiki kāsirājā Ghaṭikārassa kumbhakārassa pañca, mattāni taṇḍula, vāha, satāni pāhesi paṇḍu, - puṭakassa sālino tad-upiyaṇ ca sūpeyyaṃ.* Comy says that these are for Ghaṭikāra and the monastic community for the 3 months (MA 3:287). We must surmise that, on being informed of this, Ghaṭikāra would then accept the gifts.

²⁶¹ *Rājā kho bahu, kicco bahu, karaṇīyo, alam me rañño ’va hotūti.* Comy says that Ghaṭikāra rejects the gifts on account of his fewness of wishes (*app ’icchatā*). He realizes that the king has sent the gifts of food because he hears of the Buddha’s praises of his own virtues. He thinks, “I have no need of this. With what I get from my work (making pots, etc, in exchange for food, etc) I am able to both support my parents and the Buddha.” (MA 3:287 f). Indeed, Ghaṭikāra is Kassapa Buddha’s chief supporter. Apparently, after Ghaṭikāra’s passing, the long-lived king Kikī becomes the Buddha’s chief supporter. See §14 n.